FROM BAPTISM TO HOLY COMMUNION

LESSONS FOR SCHOLARS BETWEEN THE AGES OF ELEVEN AND FOURTEEN

M. V. HUGHES

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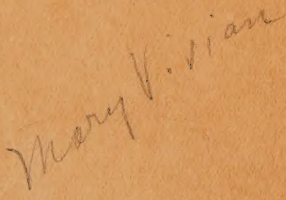
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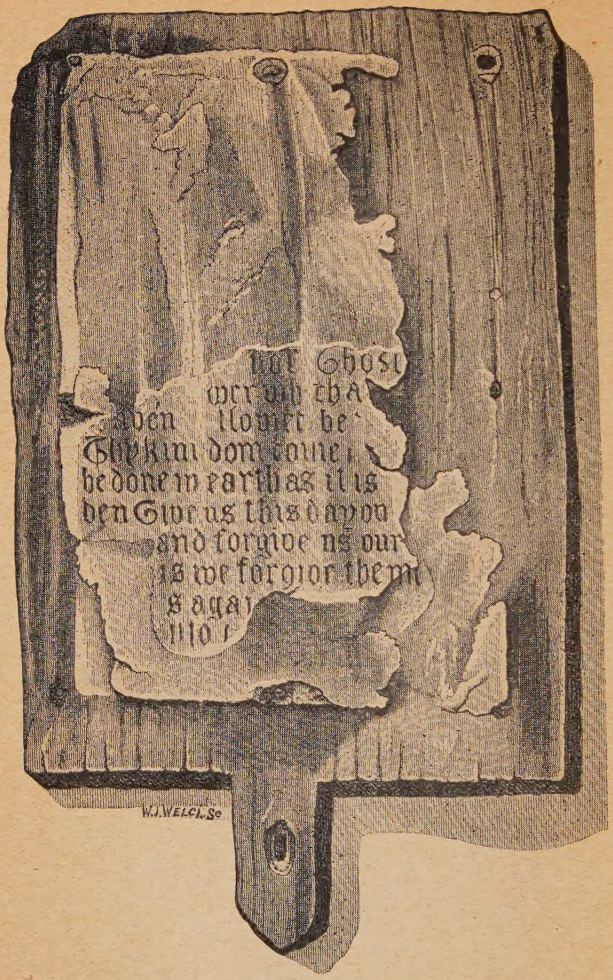

HORN BOOK.

Found under the floor of Over Church, 1857.

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FROM BAPTISM TO HOLY COMMUNION

LESSONS ON THE CHURCH CATECHISM (FOR SCHOLARS 11-14 YEARS)

BY

M. V. HUGHES

LATE HEAD OF THE TRAINING DEPARTMENT, BEDFORD COLLEGE, LONDON
AUTHOR OF "CHRIST'S FIRST MISSIONERS"

WITH SIXTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS

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† This plate shows clearly the distinction between Chancel Steps and Altar Steps.

FOREWORD

The aim of these lessons is to induce an intelligent study of the grounds of the Christian religion as set forth in the Catechism; to inspire enthusiasm for Christian ideals without direct moralising; to interest the children in the historical setting of the Catechism; to lead them to read the Bible with some definite purpose; to infuse fresh life into those services of the Church which are already familiar; and, wherever possible, to associate some portion of beautiful literature with the well-known phrases of the Catechism.

The pupils should be provided with a note-book for individual work, to be done either in class or at home. These note-books, if carefully kept, ought to make interesting records of the year's work, and each week's work should be dated.

A Bible and Prayer-book should be at hand for each pupil to refer to *when required* during the lesson. (Great effort should be made that the copies used by the class are in bold, clear print; small print is unattractive and injurious.) Slips of paper and pencils should be provided for rough work and expression of ideas during the lesson; the note-books should not be used for this purpose. The scholars should be encouraged to put into them their very best work—illustrations can be brought from home; portions may be illuminated, &c.

LESSON I

A Catechism Class in the Early Church

[*Note.*—The chief difficulty in beginning a course of lessons on the Catechism is the fact that most children of this age are already familiar with its *words*, not knowing them perfectly, but sufficiently to think that they know all about it, and that further lessons on it are likely to be wearisome. This mood is best met by opening up difficult questions at the outset, showing the pupils how much there is to learn, and continually suggesting further avenues of study as the course proceeds, even at the risk of going over the heads of some members of the class. Definite time should be set apart for individual work after the lesson, and it is then that the teacher can help the weaker members by adjusting the tasks to their capacity. *It is not intended that each pupil should do all the additional work suggested at the end of the lessons.* A knowledge of the correct wording of the Catechism should be demanded of all, but anything like dreary repetition avoided; an occasional test-question is generally sufficient. Should there be any scholar entirely unfamiliar with the Catechism, he should be shown it in the Prayer-book the previous Sunday, and asked to read it through before the course of lessons begins.]

I. Introduction (N.B.—No books open).—We are now to meet together to study the Church Catechism. No doubt you all know the words of it; perhaps some of you know it perfectly. This will be a help, because it will leave nearly all our time free for finding out more *about* the Catechism, and for discussing difficult questions that arise out of it. I shall no doubt ask some questions you cannot answer. Perhaps you will ask me some that I cannot answer. And further, it may be that, as in all great subjects, we shall find some questions which none of us can answer. Now, questions that we cannot answer are always interesting, because they set

us thinking and puzzling and inquiring from our books and our friends. So the more questions you ask me the better, whether I can answer them or not.

> [*Note.*—All seriously asked questions in history or theology that may arise during this course should be noted, and if the teacher cannot answer them to his own satisfaction, he should seek guidance.]

II. The Word "Catechism."—To begin with the word itself, what does a "Catechism" mean? Let the class open their Prayer-books and read the title of the Catechism—"that is to say, an *Instruction*." Many of our lessons are *instructions*, and yet we do not call them catechisms; so it must be a special kind of instruction. What language does it come from? How do we come to have this curious Greek word for this instruction by question and answer? When was it first used? To answer these questions we shall have to go back in thought many, many hundreds of years, to the early days of Christianity, and picture to ourselves a Catechism class (just exactly what *we* are now) as it was then.

III. An Ancient Catechism Class: Its Members.—Let us first use our eyes, and then our ears. The first thing that strikes us, in taking a glimpse at this early class, is the extraordinary *variety* in the pupils. They are of all *ages*: old people who have only just heard of Christ are side by side with little children—the children of parents already Christian. They are of all *nations*; a glance round will show us the well-known features of the Jew, the clear-cut face of a Greek, the Roman toga, the dress of the Arab, and even here and there we may see a negro. They are of every grade and condition in *social life*; we see officers of the great Roman army, soldiers in the ranks, wealthy merchants, women of noble birth, and probably a very large number of slaves. (It is easy to know which are the slaves, because the freemen wear a ring to distinguish them.) Learning and cleverness, too, make no distinction here; we may see the thoughtful face of a Greek philosopher side by side with a weather-beaten, ignorant sailor. Nothing counts as honourable here except a knowledge of Christian faith and duty.

IV. Where the Catechism Class was Held.—Now let us look at the *place* where these people are all assembled. Not in a church [or schoolroom] as we are now, but in the porch. You will think it must be a very large porch, and so it is. The early churches used to have a large portion of the main building, running across the whole western end, separated off as the porch, or "narthex" as it was called. (Draw a rough plan on the board to show this. See "Pictures and Illustrations for the Teacher," Series V., No. 5.)

V. Why it was not Held in the Church. (Put the question to the class first).—The Catechism is not being held in the church, because all these people are not yet full members of the Church, not yet Christians in the strict sense, *not yet baptized*. They are being prepared for baptism. Why should they not be baptized immediately? (Let the class think out some reasons for themselves; would a missionary in a heathen land to-day baptize converts immediately?) It was necessary for them to understand the religion they desired to make their own, and all that it required them to believe and do. During the times of persecution the Christians were obliged to hold their meetings in *secret*, so that the knowledge of their doctrines was not widely known, even to well-educated converts. Again, they had to be *cautious*, lest some unworthy person should be baptized; even a spy was a possibility. And yet again, as time went on, false teaching and *mistakes* arose about Christian doctrine, and these had to be set right or contradicted. Thus there came to be a long interval (sometimes as much as three years) between a person's first public confession that he believed in Christ, and his baptism; and the candidates for baptism became quite a large body. Now we can understand why this large porch is so necessary to hold the Catechism Class.

VI. What was Taught.—Next, let us use our ears and find out what *subjects* are being taught to all these people. The teacher should now induce the children to put together the things a person ought to be taught before becoming a member of the Church.

Ruins of a Basilica, Silchester.

[The question should be put in a broad, general way that will lead the children to approach it with a fresh mind, not trying to *recollect* the subjects treated in the school syllabus or in the Catechism. Provide pencils and paper, and let each pupil write down a list of such subjects as occur to him. Probably among those given will be "the Bible," "the Commandments," "the Creed," "what we ought to do." It is better at this stage not to correct any bald expression, such as "the Bible," but to accept all attempts and work them into the lesson.]

Now let us compare what you have written with a course actually laid down in a book of the early Church containing directions as to ecclesiastical matters ["Apostolical Constitutions"]. It begins with instruction on the nature and character of God; then follows teaching about the life of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit. Another important subject is Scripture history. A third subject is the morality required of a Christian —the life he should lead. This last was of great importance to converts from the evil habits and sins of paganism.

VII. How it was Taught.—We can not only hear what is being taught in the narthex, but we can even listen to the *way* these pupils are learning. Some of the classes are quietly attending lectures. Other classes are *learning by heart*, not from books, as you mostly do now, for many could not read, but by repeating the words after the teacher. You know how much it helps our memory to hear words pronounced by a number of voices all together. (Let the teacher give an illustration.) As we look on at this Catechism class, the peculiar sound of this answering together is one of the most striking features, and indeed it was so common a characteristic of the teaching that it was the cause of the name "Catechism" being given to the class. This word is formed from two Greek words, "kata," down, and "echo," a ringing sound, for the ringing sound, or echo, went down the hall, and no doubt could be heard outside the building.

VIII. The Language Used.—We are now able to see more exactly what the word "Catechism" means: it is

a method of *impressing the leading truths* of a subject by question and answer. The word is Greek, because Greek was the common language employed throughout the Roman Empire in the early days of Christianity, and therefore became the language of the early Church. Look in your Catechism for another Greek word. The "*Catechist*" was the teacher. The word for the pupils has unfortunately not been kept; they were called "Catechumens," and the whole body of those preparing for baptism was called the "Catechumenate."

[For younger pupils the two following paragraphs may be omitted.]

IX. How the Catechumens were Classified.—Perhaps you will like to know a little more about these early Catechumens. You remember that we saw young and old side by side in the narthex. They were not arranged, as you are, according to age. Lead the class to suggest that it was according to their knowledge of Christian truth and duty.

There were four main classes. First, the strangers who had heard of the Gospel and wanted to know more: these were called *Inquirers*. If their intentions were serious and their character good, they almost at once joined the class called *Hearers*, who received regular lessons and were allowed, after the Catechism class, to come into the church to *hear* the Scriptures read and the sermon. The third class, called *Kneelers*, received more advanced lessons, and were allowed to remain in church for the prayers. Finally, the fourth class consisted of the *Elect* (or Competent), who were ready for baptism, and only waiting for the service. They were solemnly assembled in the church a few days beforehand; the doors were closed, and the bells rung; a copy of the Creed and the Lord's Prayer (the first time they had seen these *written*) was given to each, with the words, "Well-beloved sons, return to your own home, and there await the hour when, by the grace of God, baptism may be performed on you."

X. Comparison of Ancient Catechism Class with ours To-day.—The teacher should now invite the class to

make a comparison between the early "Catechumenate" and the Sunday school or "Catechism" in their own parish. Let likenesses and differences be given in any order, so long as the class are thinking about the matter and taking an interest in their own present-day catechumenate. Confirmation and not baptism is what our scholars are preparing for, but the "Confirmation Classes," held each year, are not the only preparation for it. Quite little children begin to ask questions about how they came here, Who made the world, and so on. They are little "Inquirers." Later on they are told the Gospel and Old Testament stories, and become "Hearers." When they are old enough to come to church they answer to the "Kneelers." Finally they become Candidates for Confirmation. You see, then, that in coming here to-day to study our Catechism together, you and I "are treading where the saints have trod," and are carrying on the work that has kept the world faithful to Christ for nearly two thousand years.

[*Note.*—The *order* of the paragraphs in these lessons need not be adhered to, if a question from the class gives a lead. For instance, if a pupil should ask, "How could all these peoples of different nations understand each other?" the point about the Greek language should be given first of all. An ideal lesson would consist entirely of answers to questions put by the class; every question should be welcomed, even at the expense of giving up the best arrangement of the lesson.]

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Show, by a drawing, where the Catechumens were taught in early times.
2. Describe a Catechism Class of 1,500 years ago.
3. Write down the four classes of the Catechumenate, and opposite each the name of a scholar in your school who would correspond to it.
4. Read the preface to St. Luke's Gospel, and notice the reference to catechising. [N.B.—The last word is "catechised" in the Greek.]

5. Print carefully in your "Catechism Notebook" the title of the Catechism.

N.B.—These Catechism note-books, in the hands of a keen teacher, can prove records most interesting to the scholars. They should be encouraged to put into them their very best work—illustrations can be brought from home; portions may be illuminated, &c.

LESSON II

How the Catechism came to be Written

Introduction.—We have seen how the Early Christians provided for the teaching of their children and of their converts. Now we will turn to our own country of England, and see how this work of teaching Christian truth was carried on in olden days.

I. Latin the Language of the Church.—Let us fancy ourselves in England a few hundred years ago, in the reign, say, of John, or Richard III.; we go into a church on Sunday morning; we cannot understand what the priest is saying, for he is repeating the words of the service in a foreign tongue. What language would it be? Invite the class to consider *why* Latin was used in the churches. Rome, the chief centre of Christianity—the language of Rome used by those who composed the services; consequently the Latin tongue closely connected with the Church; indeed it came to be thought almost irreverent to use any other language (the common words of everyday life) for sacred things.

II. How the Uneducated were Taught Religion.—Although there was something beautiful and grand in this use of one language everywhere, it is clear that uneducated grown-up people (and most people *were* uneducated in those days), and children, could take very little intelligent part in the Church services. But from quite early times, before King Alfred's reign, and again and again afterwards, the Archbishops in England ordered the parish priests "to instil" the Creed and Christian duties into their people. It had to be done by word of mouth; that is, the priest had to teach each person, and hear him say over the Creed or the Lord's

Prayer, or whatever was to be learned. Why not give them books? The class will perhaps suggest some of the following reasons: There was no paper; vellum was expensive. There was no printing; copying took time. The monks were always busy copying books, but these could never be cheap and plentiful. Again, it is not enough to *have* a book, you must be able to read it. The majority of the people could neither read nor write.

There were two other ways of teaching people who could not read. (Perhaps the class will suggest pictures.) *Pictures* of scenes from the Bible were painted on the walls of the church, or designed in glass for the windows. One learns a great deal from looking at a beautiful picture. Another very curious method was for the monks to *act* events in the Bible for the people to watch. (Perhaps the class have heard of these "miracle plays," and of the famous one still surviving at Oberammergau.)

III. How those who could Read were Provided for.—For those who could read and also could afford to buy them, there were little books called "primers," containing portions of the service, some of the Psalms, and later on the Gospels and Epistles, anthems and the Litany, in *English*. Some of these primers still exist that were written as far back as the fourteenth century. Another help was provided by translations of the services, Latin and English side by side, just as Welsh and English Prayer-books are sometimes printed to-day. These were studied at home, and enabled those who had them to follow the meaning of the Latin services in church.

IV. How the Children were Taught.—The children were provided for in a very curious way. You children of to-day, with so many books, can hardly imagine how rare and costly a book was in Early England. We all know how little dirty fingers can spoil a book, so a special kind was made. A small sheet of vellum, with the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the alphabet written on it, was covered with a piece of transparent horn, and

then nailed on to or framed in wood, with a handle at one end; and in the handle a hole, so that the horn-book (as it was called) could be fastened to the little child's belt. (Draw a horn-book on the board.)

V. Porch Schools.—We must remember that there were no schools for children as we have them to-day.

HORN-BOOK.

It was the duty of one of the priests to teach them in the church porch. (Recall any such porch the class may know, or show rough sketch on board.) The

scholars would sit on the stone or wooden benches, spelling out their horn-books, ready to stand up and recite as the priest told them. So that in those ways the great mass of the people in England were taught in *English* what to believe, how to pray, and what they ought to do, while they attended at the beautiful *Latin* services in a spirit of devotion and reverence, but not with full understanding.

VI. Changes at the Reformation.—Now we know how different it is to-day. We hear no Latin in church; the whole service is conducted in English. When did this change take place ? It was not done all at once, but very gradually and very cautiously; some changes were made in the reign of Henry VIII.; and a complete English Prayer-book was brought out in the reign of his son, Edward VI. The teacher should ask the class to express an opinion as to whether it was a change for the *good*. If they think yes, ask what word we use when we speak of a change for the good. When we speak of the Reformation, we can think of this change of language as one of the matters that were reformed. This change of language was not the only change at this time. The taste for learning was greatly increased owing to the invention of printing; travelling became more common, and knowledge of other people's thoughts and doings was spreading in all the countries of Europe. So it was only natural that people should have *different* ideas on some important points.

VII. How the Catechism came to be Written.—A strong desire grew among Churchmen that all should *understand* the grounds of their belief. So when the first English Prayer-book was published, a short compendium in the form of question and answer was placed in front of the Confirmation Service, so that all boys and girls who came to be confirmed might be tested.

Let the class open their Prayer-books and see the Confirmation Service with the Catechism in front, but now separated. This was the first appearance of the Catechism that you now hold in your hands. Curiously enough, no one is certain who wrote it, just as is the case

with many of the finest writings in the world. However, it is supposed that the parts called "our duty to God" and "our duty to our neighbour"* were written by Goodrich, Bishop of Ely. (Show portrait, see page 223.) For in the Bishop's Palace at Ely there are two stone tablets with these two parts of the Catechism engraved on them.† The date on the stones is 1552, shortly after the Catechism was first published; and it is known that Bishop Goodrich was one of those appointed to prepare the English Prayer-book. The latter part of the Catechism,* on the Sacraments, was not added till the reign of James I. We shall speak more of this in a later lesson.

VIII. Edward VI., the Boy King.—Since we cannot name any one person as the author of the Catechism, it is best to connect it in our minds with the king in whose reign it appeared. This is very appropriate, because Edward VI. was a boy much like one of you in this class; he was king from the age of ten to sixteen, and the first English Prayer-book containing the Catechism came out when he was twelve. He was a good, serious-minded boy, and cared intensely for his country and his religion. Unfortunately, his life was made sad by the jealous quarrels of his uncles, and by his own illness. He has been called "the boy patron of boys," because of the numerous schools founded in his reign. (Show a portrait of Edward VI., and let it remain in view for a time.) The most famous of these schools is Christ's Hospital; most of you have probably seen a "Blue Coat" boy, who wears to-day the same kind of dress that London boys wore in Edward VI.'s time. In this school the Church Catechism was one of the chief subjects of instruction. In 1570 one of the masters in this school is found making a request for "bokes for the children, which is the Catechisme Late set forthe by Mr. Nowell, Dean of Powlles." This is the same Catechism we have now; this Mr. Nowell, Dean of St. Paul's, was supposed to be the author of it,

* Let the scholars find these portions in their books.

† See "Pictures and Illustrations for the Teacher," Series xiv., No. 12.

but he may only have had the final "setting forth" of it. As there is so much uncertainty about the authorship, let us remember *when* it was written by connecting it in our mind with King Edward VI.

IX. The Language of the Catechism.—Let us next think a little of the language in which it was written. Are there any words or turns of expression in it not *quite* usual with us now? (Let the class find some of these.) The class will probably know that the English language has not always been just as it is to-day. If we picked up a book of the time of Alfred it would seem like a foreign language. Later on in the time of Wyclif, who put the Bible into English, the language was still very far from what we use to-day.

[Let the teacher write on the board or bring already written on a sheet of paper these three early versions of the opening words of the Lord's Prayer:—

Eighth Century.—"Fader usær thu arth in Heofnas."
Thirteenth Century.—"Fader oure that art in heve."
The Primer of 1538.—"Our Father whiche art in heuen."]

But when we come to the time of the Tudor kings and queens (let the class name them) the English language was at its very finest, and had become what we call Modern English, almost as we speak it to-day. The class may be able to name some of the great writers of this time (Shakespeare, Spenser, Bacon, Philip Sidney). It was, then, happy for us that our English Prayer-book and Catechism were compiled at this particular time.

X. The Catechism Best Honoured by Study.—Just as we are carrying on an ancient Church practice in coming to be taught the Faith, so in learning the Catechism we are preserving a most valuable Church possession; for the way to preserve a noble writing is to know it, and study it, and use it. Just as a Bible is not for the purpose of ornament to be put away and kept clean, but for use, so let us honour our Catechism by making a real use of it and studying it with all our might.

PORTRAIT OF EDWARD VI.
(*Holbein.*)

Portrait of Dean Nowel.

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Find some words in the "Morning Prayer" that remind you that it was once written in Latin.

2. Say why you think the reign of Edward VI. an important one for the Church.

3. Write down some ways in which people were taught religious truth in the days when very few could read.

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—Read the reign of Edward VI. in any good History.

LESSON III

The Plan of the Catechism and the Plan of the Church Building

Introduction.—Before we begin the study of the Catechism itself, we will find out how it was intended to be studied.

I. The Title.—Let the children each have in their hands a copy of the Prayer-book, and let the teacher see that the print is large enough to be read easily. Call upon one pupil to read the full title of the Catechism aloud. Then let the scholars turn to the "Public Baptism of Infants" and read aloud a part of the exhortation to godparents at the close, "... ye shall call upon him ... soul's health." Explain the meaning of the word "vulgar" by referring to last lesson; lead the scholars to tell why it was inserted.

II. How the Catechism was to be Taught.—Now let the class turn to the rubrics at the end of the Catechism and let one scholar read aloud the first of these. Call their attention to the care that was taken that the Catechism should be thoroughly taught. Lead the scholars to discover that, first, it is to be the work of the *curate*—that is, the parish priest (not the assistant-priest, as the word means to-day; refer to the expression "Bishops and curates" in Morning Prayer.) Then it is to be done "*diligently*," which means that the work was not to be put off or set aside for any slight reason. Again, it was to be done *openly*, on Sundays, in the middle of Evening Prayer. This was no doubt for the indirect

good of the congregation, who would thus from time to time be reminded of their baptismal vows; for we all know that there are generally more people present at Evening Prayer than in the morning. In days when artificial light was scarce, Evening Prayer was usually held in the afternoon. But notice that the curate was to teach only as many as he found *convenient*, so that on one Sunday he could instruct the younger ones and on another the elder. And again he was to take up only some *part* of the Catechism each time.

III. Compare with Present Day.—Discuss with the class the differences in arrangement that we have in the present day on these points, with special reference to the customs of their particular parish (see also Section VI.)—*e.g.* publicity not so much required when all can read; the small classes of Sunday school more "convenient" for individual teaching; impossible to teach little children and older scholars at the same time and in the same place; consequently others besides the parish priest must help in the teaching. This is rendered necessary by the greater number of scholars nowadays.

IV. Who came to the Catechism.—Let another pupil read the second rubric and let all find here three sets of *grown-up* people, who are to cause three sets of *young* people to come to the Catechism class. *Fathers and mothers* cause their *children* to come; *dames* (that is, mistresses; compare "madame" and the old phrase a "dame's school") cause their *servants*; and *masters* their *prentices*. Ask the class the meaning of this word, in its modern form "apprentices." From the English "apprehend" or the French "apprendre" show that it means a learner. (Some of the class will have heard of a boy being "apprenticed.") In England in the Middle Ages apprentices were far more common than to-day. If a boy wanted to learn a craft, or a trade, or a profession, such as that of doctor or lawyer, he was obliged to serve for seven years under a "master," who taught him, saw that he did good work and was industrious (a prentice had to work from daybreak to curfew), and was like a second father to him. The boy in his

turn worked for the master, and at the end of the seven years became a master and could take prentices himself.

Lead the class to see that the spirit of this rubric still holds, although young people may not be called "prentices," nor mistresses "dames."

V. A Catechism Class in Tudor Times.—From these two rubrics we can almost picture to ourselves what a Catechism class was like in those times. In a country town, for instance, the church bells would be ringing for Evening Prayer at three in the afternoon. (Ask the class why bells were so important in the country districts and in times when clocks were rare.) The children, the servants, and the prentices would be seated "conveniently" for being catechised, either in the front benches or down the sides of the nave. The children would be generally quite young, the prentices all ages from twelve on, but mainly about your age, and the servants showing even greater variety in age. The prentices would be young carpenters, leather-workers, glaziers, silversmiths, apothecaries (as the doctors were called), and so on. We should not know each by his distinctive dress, as we should on a working day, because, being Sunday, the signs of their profession were laid aside. (See opening words of Shakespeare's "Julius Cæsar.") Among the servants we should see stable-boys, young gardeners, kitchenmaids, and so on. And now the Second Lesson is over and we can picture the clergyman standing on the chancel steps to catechise. Perhaps we shall hear the same sort of "echo" that was heard in the Early Church, as the children and prentices answer together. Then we can imagine the catechist walking down the nave to question some individual child as to the meaning of the words he is using. We can see the beautiful evening light coming through the coloured windows as the whole congregation rises to sing the "Nunc Dimittis," and then joins in the Creed with fresh enthusiasm.

VI. The Place for Catechising is the Church.—Refer again to the first rubric and the words "in the church."

Although, as we have seen, it is not always possible to hold our Catechism class in the church, we feel that it is the right place for it. Let us think of the building itself, and notice how much it teaches us while we sit silently in it.

[Churches ought always to be open, and the children should be encouraged to go quietly in to see any church they come across. The teacher should be familiar with the churches in the immediate neighbourhood.]

VII. In what Ways all Churches are alike.—Ask the class to shut their eyes for a few moments, and think of any other churches they have been in besides their own; such as other churches in the neighbourhood, cathedrals, seaside churches, and so on. Then ask them to fix on one or two points in which these churches are *all alike*, or some things which they *all* contain. Let each pupil then write down a rough list. Between them they will probably name the pulpit, font, altar or Lord's Table, lectern, seats, organ, bells, porch; some may mention the shape, as being oblong or like a cross. The teacher should write all on the board, regardless of order or importance (only rejecting at first very obvious mistakes, which the other children will quickly detect, such as pews, tower, coloured windows).

VIII. The Most Important Parts of a Church.—Let the class take their lists again and underline what they consider the most important things. There will be some variety, but the more thoughtful pupils will underline the Lord's Table or Altar and the Font, and some the Pulpit and Lectern. Underline doubly on the board the Lord's Table or Altar and the Font.

IX. Their Relative Positions.—Now let the class take pencil and paper and make a plan of their own church, marking, as nearly as they can remember, the exact position of the Lord's Table or Altar and the Font. The teacher should assist the slower ones and also make a large rough plan on the board, so that all may have it correct. Then ask them to put by the side of their plan a cross to show the points of the compass. So many English children find a difficulty in this matter that a

digression may have to be made to explain what is meant. If they can remember on which side of the church the sun streams in at Morning Prayer, that will be south; from this they can mark the other points. Let them next put a mark at the door where they usually go in. Not far from this door is the Font.

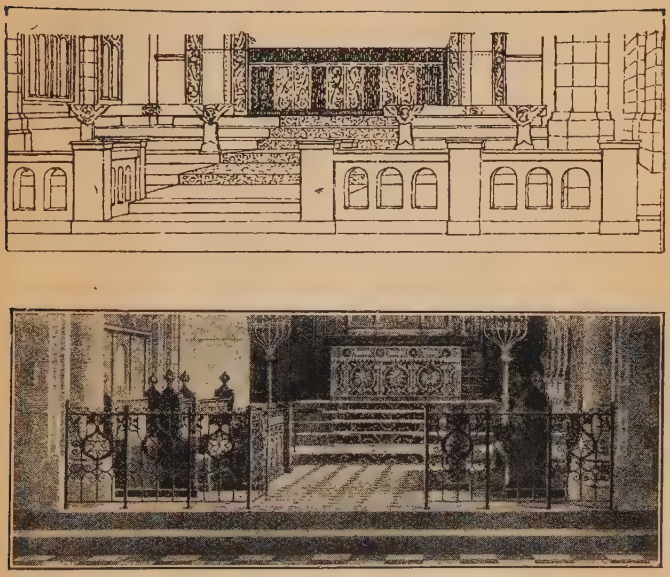
X. The Font.—Ask why the Font should be placed near the entrance. If no answer, ask one pupil what happened on the very first day he went to church. He was carried to the Font, and *no farther*.

XI. The Nave.—When next you came to church you were taken into the central body of the church, or nave; there with many others you said the Creed and the Lord's Prayer; you listened to the lessons and the Commandments, you were (perhaps a little later on) "caused to hear sermons." Notice how the pulpit and lectern are placed, so that the voice can easily reach all the people. Let one of the class read aloud the rubric before the First Lesson.

XII. The Chancel.—When for many years you have attended church and been continually taught how to worship God, there comes that great day in your life when you go up to the steps of the Chancel. Describe how the boys and girls kneel there while the Bishop lays his hands on them. (The accompanying picture shows clearly the distinction between chancel steps and altar steps.)

XIII. The Altar or Lord's Table.—Finally you come up to the Altar, to receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It is to this that the whole building points and leads. (Show here a picture of the interior of a church.) Notice that this is always (in the English Church) placed at the east end. Ask children to suggest a reason for this. Our Lord was a New Life, a Rising Sun, a Day-Spring (or Dawn) to the world, and Christians have always looked on the east, or place of the rising sun, as a symbol of Him.

XIV. The Plan of the Building the same as the Plan of the Catechism.—Now let the class turn to the Catechism again and notice how it begins with our baptism



Low Chancel Screens.

(This picture shows clearly the distinction between Chancel Steps and Altar Steps.)

at the Font—shows us how we first became Christians. Then it goes on to show us what is expected of Christians, what we should believe and do. Next it shows us how we are helped to lead a right life; we have Prayer and the Sacraments. So we are led again to the Altar or Lord's Table and full life of the Church.

[*Note.*—This analysis of the Catechism will be far more interesting and impressive if the pupils work it out for themselves, and of their own accord notice the *order* of the teaching and find out the reason, the teacher merely guiding and suggesting.]

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Make a plan of your own church, and beneath it write a plan of the Catechism.

2. Notice where there are steps in your church (probably at the Font, Chancel, and Altar), and say why you think they are put there.

3. Attend a Baptismal Service, if possible, before next lesson, *or* read the "Service for the Public Baptism of Infants."

LESSON IV

Baptism and the Christian's Birthday

[*Note.*—Since the right understanding of baptism, and all that it implies, is the keynote of this course of lessons, it is very important that the present lesson should be made as impressive as possible. This result is best obtained by getting the children to prepare their minds for it, and to *expect* an important lesson. Let the teacher inquire at close of previous lesson if any are likely to be absent; also give them work to do for the lesson. The best preparation is for the class to attend a baptism, trying to notice (perhaps write down) all that happens. Failing this, elder pupils might read through the "Public Baptism of Infants" in their Prayer-books, marking any passage they would like to ask questions about, or that they think specially beautiful. Younger ones might ask their mothers to tell them all they can remember about their own baptism, when it was, and what was done. *All* should be asked to bring their baptismal cards, if possible.]

Introduction.—All of us here to-day were baptized as little children. We cannot remember anything about it. But I have asked you to find out all you can, by questions at home or by looking at your Prayer-book; and I hope you will be able to tell me nearly everything. (Let the teacher throughout the lesson try to get every point from the class.)

I. The Font and the People.—Let us try to picture exactly what happens at a public baptism. Some of the class have no doubt been present when very few people formed the congregation—only the priest, the child, its parents and godparents, and a few friends. This is not the ideal of the Church. The adding of a new member to Christ's Holy Church is so important that it is plainly ordered that a baptism ought to take place after the Second Lesson in Morning or Evening Prayer. (Read or quote the rubric to this effect.) The whole congregation are thus reminded of the baptismal vows

made on their behalf, and join their prayers for the new member. The service thus becomes far more beautiful and impressive. If there is a choir they perhaps go down in procession to the font, singing a hymn, stand round while the Sacrament is administered, and then return singing the "Nunc Dimittis." Why is this psalm so particularly appropriate?

II. The Baptism.—Let the class open their books at the "Public Baptism of Infants," and notice the preliminary words, "Hath this child been already baptized or no?" showing the care taken against a vain repetition of the Sacrament; the short address to the people in preparation; the prayers for the child; the Gospel and explanation of it; the questions to the godparents; and the giving of the name. All this *leads up* to the actual baptism. Let the class notice how very few the words are which accompany this act—only twenty words. (Invite the class to examine these important words very closely.) What are the absolutely necessary points in it? *Water* must touch the person while the *Name of the Trinity* is pronounced by the person baptizing. As soon as this is done the child has become a member of the Church. In cases where a child is too ill to go through the whole service, and is in danger of death, he is fully baptized if this central act is performed. Let the class look at the three services of baptism in the Prayer-book, and find these important words. Let them also read the rubric at the end of "Private Baptism" and the answer in the Catechism to "What is the outward visible sign or form in baptism?"

III. Trine or Triple Immersion.*—The children will have noticed that the clergyman, in baptizing a child, pours the water three times upon it. This symbol of the Trinity is of very ancient use. Read aloud these lines of Keble:—

> Once in His Name Who made thee,
> Once in His Name Who died for thee,
> Once in His Name Who lives to aid thee,
> We plunge thee in Love's boundless sea.

* The question of immersion will be introduced into the next lesson.

IV. The Reception into the Congregation.—Then the priest does a very beautiful act. He makes a cross (not with water) with his thumb on the child's forehead. Let one pupil read the words said : "We receive this child . . . life's end." Make clear to the class that this is not an essential part of baptism, but is a continual reminder that we are to be faithful to Christ, Who died for us on the Cross. In the days of the Early Christians the Cross was a thing to be really ashamed of—they were ridiculed and despised for worshipping some one who had been hanged on a cross. We think of the Cross as so sacred that it requires an effort to realise this. Invite the class to consider whether we may ever be tempted to be ashamed of our religion to-day. Get or give some instances of courage in this matter (*e.g.* Arthur in "Tom Brown's Schooldays," Part II., chap. i.).

At the time that certain changes were made in the Prayer-book, and some ceremonies abolished, the extreme reformers (or Puritans, as they were called) wanted to do away with the sign of the Cross in baptism. No amount of persuasion or pressure from the Puritans could induce those who revised our Prayer-book to take away the sign of the Cross in baptism. This fact makes it still more full of meaning for us.

V. The Inner Meaning of Baptism.—So far we have been thinking of all we *see* and *hear* when a child is baptized. Now let us think of the part that we cannot see or hear. Invite the class to express in their own language what happens to the little child's soul at his baptism. (Sometimes more independent ideas are expressed if each pupil writes down what he thinks; avoid at first any reference to the answer in the Catechism.) If, as is most probable, the class expresses in words nothing at all, make it the occasion to say that the deepest truths are always hard to express, and sometimes impossible. Our Lord knew this in teaching His disciples. (Quote St. John iii. 12 or St. Matt. xvi. 9.) That is perhaps why He so often used parables—pointed to something they could *see*, and told them it was like that.

VI. A New Birth.—Let us see, then, to what Our Lord compares baptism, or the fact of becoming a Christian. He calls it being "born again." This is a kind of parable to show us how great a change it is, how entirely *new*.

Perhaps you have wondered what change can take place in the soul of a little *baby* that is in any way like this. Although the change is invisible, it is a new kind of *life* which the baby enters upon. Now, the ordinary physical life with which we are all so familiar is a profound mystery: scientific men spend their time trying to discover the "secret of life," and never get any nearer it. How it begins, what it is, no one knows. So we must be content also not to understand how the spiritual life begins. All life is God's work, not ours. But we are quite clear that by baptism a child is brought into a "state of salvation"—that is, a condition in which as a member of the Church he is in touch with all the grace and help which God has promised to those who try to serve Him faithfully.

VII. Not a Charm, but a Beginning.—We must dismiss from our minds any idea of a magic change from naughtiness to goodness. Just as birth is only the *beginning* of our natural life, so our baptism is only the beginning of our spiritual life. Think of the baby's natural life for a minute; how helpless he is, how dependent on those around for food and warmth; it is not enough for him to have *life*—he must be protected and fed till old enough to protect and feed himself. In the same way, it is not enough to baptize a child and then leave him; he must be taught and trained and helped until he is able to decide and judge for himself. Notice how the words of the Prayer-book emphasise this. It speaks of the Christian life as a stormy sea-passage and as a battle, and prays that the "child may lead the rest of his life according to *this beginning*." (Let scholars find passages in their Prayer-books.)

VIII. Our Sinful Nature.—Another matter may puzzle you. The child is spoken of as being "dead unto sin," "the old Adam" is to be buried; and in

the Catechism we are said to be "born in sin" and "children of wrath" by nature. Surely, you will think, this is too strong a thing to say of an innocent little baby brought to the font a week or two after his birth. Not at all. Every child born into the world has an inheritance of evil—natural inclinations to do what is wrong. If you have little brothers or sisters you have no doubt observed it for yourself: how very early, and without any bad examples, a child may show temper, greed, vanity, deceit, and so on. Now a child that is baptized into Christ's Church has become a "child of grace." That does not mean that these evil tendencies have been overcome by magic, but the child has been "born" into a world of *help* (for that is what "grace" means). He is henceforth to be helped to overcome evil. By parents, by godparents, by the whole Church, he is helped till he reaches the Altar for Holy Communion, and there he is to receive continually the greatest Help of all.

IX. An Important Date.—Let each child state, if possible, the date of his baptism. Suggest that this day be marked by some little *private* act of devotion, as being the day when we were "born" into the Church of Christ; it is our Church birthday. (The scholars may feel inclined to suggest some way of marking the day, such as making a point of going to church, even if there is no service, or they can be invited to think it over for themselves; on no account should they be *pressed* to suggest anything.)

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Learn the hymn on baptism that you like best (*e.g.* 326, 328, A. & M.).
2. Write down and learn any words from the "Public Baptism of Infants" that suggest the *growth* of spiritual life.
3. Why should we never laugh at a child's greediness or cruelty or vanity?

4. In what way might any one celebrate the day of his baptism?

5. Read the Collect for Christmas Day, or write out the lines of Keble quoted in the lesson.

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—Coleridge's "Aids to Reflection" (the chapter on baptism).

Read "Holy Baptism" in Keble's "Christian Year."

Attend a baptism service if possible.

LESSON V

Baptism and its Meaning

Introduction.—We spoke last lesson of the outward form in baptism, and tried also to see what was the spiritual meaning. To-day we will consider when and how the ceremony of baptism, or dipping in water, first arose. Let the class offer suggestions from their memory of the word in the Bible. Welcome any that are given, and note them. But suggest that in order to trace the history of anything, we have to go back as far as we can.

I. Water a very Ancient Symbol of Holiness.—The fact that water washes away dirt and stains from the body has always led very naturally to its being used as a symbol for repentance, leaving one's sins, starting a fresh life of righteousness. Reference to water in this sense is used twice in the famous penitential psalm (li.). Let the scholars quote or find it. In the early days of the Jewish nation the actual washing of the body all over was used as a sign of newness of life. For instance, Jewish authorities state that the command in Exodus xix. 10, "sanctify the people," meant that they were to be washed as a sign of their entering on the new life of righteousness under the law to be given from Sinai. Earlier still we read of Jacob ordering the same to his household before building an altar to God (Gen. xxxv. 2). And there are several other instances where the word "sanctify" is supposed to imply a dipping in water (*e.g.* Joshua vii. 13). Let the teacher quote or read aloud some of these references.

II. Jews Baptized their Proselytes.—The Jews permitted strangers to join their religion, but it was con-

sidered so great an honour that the entrance was accompanied by many rites and ceremonies. Among these baptism was always included. This signified that a heathen, in becoming a Jew, was cleansed from his former life of idolatry and sin.

III. St. John the Baptist.—The Jewish baptizing, with which you are all familiar, is that of St. John the Baptist. In this case the people who were baptized were not heathen, but Jews who had become indifferent and careless about their religion. St. John was what we should call to-day a great revivalist preacher. (The class have probably some acquaintance with a special mission service or revivalist meetings in their own neighbourhood.) The keynote of St. John's preaching was "Repentance"; and those who felt a desire to start afresh a new and better life came forward to be baptized in the river Jordan.

IV. Our Lord's Baptism.—One day, among the many who were coming forward for baptism, there came Jesus Himself. St. John paused and hesitated. Why should the Sinless One be baptized? St. John would far rather that Jesus would baptize *him*. Get from the class the answer that Our Lord made to St. John's objection. Let the class also tell what were the outward signs at this wonderful baptism of Christ. No one could fully understand the mysterious unseen part. Nor can we fully understand it now. But we know that it marked a crisis in Our Lord's earthly life of such tremendous importance that He desired to be alone for forty days to prepare for the new work that lay before Him.

V. Baptism in the Time of the Apostles.—Not only did Christ set an example to us by His own baptism, but He left an express command that all disciples should be baptized. One of the class can perhaps quote St. Matt. xxviii. 19. We can also suppose that this was one of the "things pertaining to the kingdom" referred to in Acts i. 3. It is quite clear that baptism was, from the first, the necessary rite by which all joined the Church. (The following references from Acts should be

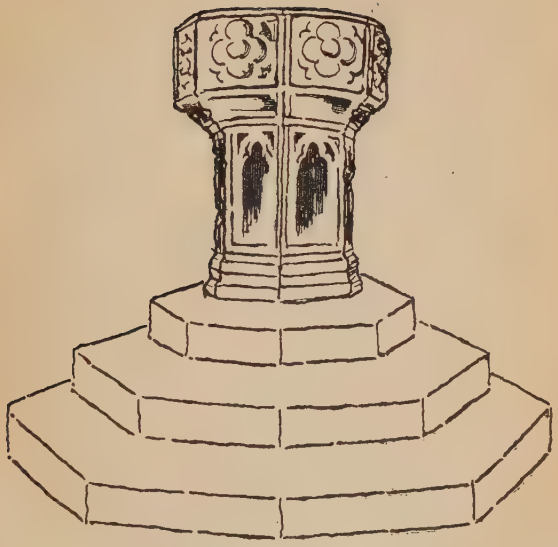
in the teacher's mind, and some may be obtained from the class: ii. 41; viii. 36; ix. 18; x. 47; xvi. 15, 33.)

[*Note.*—It is important to lay stress in all cases of doctrine on the practice of the Early Church rather than on isolated texts. The New Testament Scriptures came into existence *after* the teaching and practice of the Church had to a great extent assumed a fixed form.]

VI. Infant Baptism.—In all that we read in the New Testament about baptism there is no definite mention of an infant being baptized. But we must not suppose from this that such a thing never occurred. We read of a whole household becoming Christian in several cases; it would be very extraordinary if there were no young children among them. The fact is that when a matter is very common and known to all, there is no need to mention it. Of course in the early days the larger number would be grown-up converts, but as Christianity became more widespread, and in countries where most people were Christians, the infants would naturally be baptized, and it would be the exception to have a grown-up person baptized. The children will have noticed that there is a special service in the Prayer-book to meet this case.

VII. Pouring the Water takes the Place of Immersion.—Another change has arisen in the *manner* of baptizing. We know that when St. John baptized in Jordan the people went down into the river, and probably were covered with the water. But even in the earliest days of the Church this immersion could not always have been observed. To take one instance, the jailer and his family could hardly have undergone this during the eventful night described in Acts xvi.; the water from the prison well was probably poured over them.

Immersion is still used in some cases: converts in warm heathen lands are baptized in their native streams; and the Prayer-book supposes that children will be dipped in the font. (The class will be interested in the wording of the rubric: "He shall dip it in the water discreetly and warily.") But in ordinary cases



Ancient Font in Conway Church.

pouring over has taken the place of dipping in. Let the class suggest reasons for this. In many cases sufficient water would not be obtainable, as in desert countries. In cold countries, or even in such a climate as ours, the immersion might be dangerous to health; and with young babies it would always be attended with risk. And as the spiritual meaning of the act was more widely understood, the pouring of the water was sufficient as an outward sign.

VIII. Ancient Customs that grew up round Baptism—Remind the class of the great preparation that was made for baptism in the early centuries, sometimes lasting three years (see Lesson I.). Baptisms were not held at any time, as they are with us now, but only three times a year—Easter, Whitsuntide, and Epiphany. The ceremony was performed in the presence of a Bishop, and therefore only in large churches or cathedrals—or rather not *in* the church, but in a special building called a "baptistery." This was a large circular or eight-sided building; in the centre was the baptismal font, in which the catechumens were immersed three times; three steps led down to the floor of the font, and a gold or silver dove was suspended above.

In addition to the ceremony of receiving a Christian name and being signed with the Cross, some other symbolical acts grew up round baptism. The convert was anointed with holy *oil*, and given a little *milk* and *honey* to drink. (Both these customs are said to have been used by the Jews when they admitted a proselyte, the giving of milk and honey being a sign that the proselyte was now to be a partaker of the Holy Land.) *Salt*, as a symbol of wisdom, was also given to the newly-baptized, and a lighted *candle* to represent the light of Faith. (Quote St. Matt. v. 13, 14.)

One interesting custom was still practised as late as the time of the first Prayer-book of Edward VI. A white garment belonging to the church, called a "*chrisom*," was placed on the person who had been baptized, as a token of innocency. This was worn for eight days, and afterwards laid by in the church. Since Pentecost was

the chief feast for celebrating baptisms, it is supposed by some that the large number of people to be seen in their "chrisoms" at that season in early times had given it the name of White or Whit-Sunday. (This derivation of the word is not certain.) A child wearing this garment was called a chrisom-child (Shakespeare, "Henry V." ii. 3).

IX. The Return to Simplicity.—Most of these ancient customs have fallen into disuse. Although each one was beautiful in its meaning, the multitude of ceremonies tended to obscure the one essential rite—dipping or pouring. In going back to the simpler ceremony, the Church of England has followed more closely the practice of the days of the Apostles, who first carried out the commands of Christ. Looked at in this way, it is more simple and plainly instructive than the elaborate forms of the Middle Ages.

X. The Font.—The large baptisteries became unnecessary for several reasons. As the Church increased in numbers baptism was administered more frequently, and in each parish, instead of in cathedrals only. As in a Christian country only infants were left to be baptized, and pouring water over the child took the place of immersion, smaller fonts were built. Notice how these fonts still have a great deal of history about them. First of all, the *word* "font" reminds us of the days when founts or springs, roadside wells or rivers, were used for baptism (*e.g.* Acts viii. 36). The life of the freshly running water was looked on as a symbol of the fresh life to the convert. The *position* of the font reminds us that baptism is the entrance to the Church. The usual three steps up to the font take the place of those going down into it, and symbolise the Three Persons of the Trinity, in Whose Name the child is baptized. The *shape* is either eight-sided, like the old baptisteries, because Jesus was brought to the Temple when eight days old; or four-sided, because God's children shall enter His kingdom from North, South, East, and West; or circular, to represent eternity.

The teacher should know the history of the font of the

parish, and be able to make a sketch of it on the board. Other pictures of fonts may be shown. There is sometimes a *cover* over the font. This reminds us of the early days when the water for baptism was only blessed at stated times and then was kept for future use, instead of being renewed and sanctified each time. (The class had perhaps noted the sanctification of the water in their work for Lesson V.)

Lastly, various *decorations* should be noticed, such as carvings, inscriptions, and coloured windows near the font.

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Draw the font where you were baptized, or that of your present parish. Say what each point about it teaches you.
2. Write out St. Matt. xxviii. 19.
3. Read the story of Naaman (2 Kings v.), noticing verse 13 and its connection with this lesson.
4. Find all references to baptism in the Acts of the Apostles.

Points for Teacher's Study.—Wall's "History of Infant Baptism" (introduction). "Church Study" (Penstone), chapters xi. and xii. St. John's baptism: St. Luke iii.; Acts xix. 1-6. See and make rough sketches of as many fonts as possible in neighbourhood.

LESSON VI

Myself and My Name

Introduction.—You have now learned how a person is received into the Church of Christ. He may be faithful or unfaithful, but once baptized he is always a member of this Church. There is one custom connected with baptism which we have previously omitted in order to speak about it separately—that is the giving of the name. This is such a striking part of the ceremony that the word "christen" has come in ordinary language to mean "to give a name." (Compare the expression "christening a boat," &c.)

I. Our Own Name.—Let each pupil write down the answer to the first question "What is your Name?" If some make the mistake of putting their full names, this can be made the occasion to point out that the Catechism requires the first name (or names) only. Call attention to the curious answer printed in the book. N stands for name, M for names. Two N's printed close together were probably misread M. If so the M really = NN. To put two capitals together used to be a common way of making a plural, just as we have SS. for saints and MSS. for manuscripts.

II. The Surname.—Your other name is the one that belongs to your family, and not only to you; you share it with brothers and sisters, father and mother, and a great many cousins and other more distant relatives. It is called a surname because it is over and above your own name (from the French *sur* = over). It tells something more about you: you are John, *of the Robinsons*. You were born into this family, and naturally take a pride

in belonging to it; you are pleased when any member of it "makes a name" for himself, and you feel that you must not disgrace it.

Why should this surname not be sufficient? (Allow the class time to *feel* the necessity of an individual name, if not to express it.)

III. Need for a Personal Name.—As far back as history can go, as soon as men began to live together at all, there was need to distinguish one man from another. Originally such a name would arise from some peculiarity and be little more than a nick-name, such as "dark-hair," "swift-foot," "armstrong"; or it might come from some achievement or occupation, such as Smith, Baker, Wright. (Use illustrations from names in the class whenever possible.) Any fresh departure in life might give rise to a fresh name. Among the Romans, if a slave were given his freedom he took his late master's *name*; when a boy was fourteen years old he was given a different kind of dress and a new *name*; if a general in the army conquered a country he was called by a special *name* in honour of it; thus the conqueror of Africa was called Africanus.

There is no name of any person or place that has not some interesting meaning or history, although we cannot always trace it.

IV. Our Christian Name.—In the same way our own personal name was given to us to mark a great event, a new departure, a fresh life. Our Christian name was given to us on the day that we became Christians, and nothing more important has ever happened to us. Our name is more peculiarly our own than anything else we possess. If another child has the same Christian name, it is not because of any connection we have with him, but is a mere accident, quite unlike the sharing of the surname with brothers and sisters. Our Christian name, then, marks a great gift to us, the giving of which is witnessed by the Church, and it is, as it were, a gift to us from Christ Himself. We know that our father and mother were thoughtful and careful in choosing what it should be; it was intended to be specially

appropriate for us in some way; perhaps we were named after some great man, or near relative.

V. Our Lord's Name.—Now it may happen that your name is a very common one. (Let the teacher instance from the class.) Perhaps you sometimes wish it were more distinguished, such as —— (further instances from the class if possible). Well, it is pleasant to think that when Our Lord came to live among us, He had one of the commonest names of that time and country. What was it? "Jesus" as a name was perhaps as common as William and Jane are with us. Just as He took the ordinary occupation of a carpenter, and lived in an ordinary village, so His name was an ordinary one among His schoolfellows at Nazareth. But now it has become to us the most sacred word we know. Many people bow their heads when it is mentioned; we all reverence it. The poet George Herbert had a beautiful custom of adding "My Master" whenever the name of Jesus was spoken.

VI. The Meaning of Names.—We all know that Our Lord's name meant "Saviour." Every name originally had some meaning. Among the Jews the meaning of a name was very important, especially in early times. The children will remember from reading their Bibles how often the meaning of a name is given; they may be able to give instances (*e.g.* Ichabod, Nabal, Barnabas). The Jews as a nation were always hoping for the Messiah, who was to make them great and glorious. At the time of Our Lord they were keenly expecting Him to come and deliver them from the Romans. Every Jewish woman hoped that she might be the mother of the Messiah. This accounts for the fact that the name "Jesus" was so often given to a child in those days. Did Our Lord Himself consider names important? Recall the story of how Peter came by his name. (See Matt. xvi. 13-19.) The "Sons of Thunder" may also be instanced.

VII. The Importance of Names.—There is no doubt that this name given to Peter by Our Lord *helped* him many a time to be firm as a rock; we know he often was weak, but grew stronger and bolder. People try to act up to what is expected of them.

Boys and girls of your age are sometimes allowed to help in the choice of a name for a younger brother or sister. It is wiser not to choose a fancy name or one that merely sounds pretty, but one which will inspire the child to live up to it: an old English name such as Alfred or Edward to stir patriotism, or one from the noble army of martyrs, such as Paul or John or Philip; or one that has a beautiful meaning, such as Beatrice, Ethel. (Further instances from the class.)

VIII. Why does the Catechism begin by asking our Name?—The reason is evidently to make all the questions direct appeals to each one of us, separately. Notice how the answers are all worded "*I* am, "*I* will," "*I* believe," &c. A general question addressed to a class and answered by nearly all, or by just the leading boys and girls, is not so serious and impressive as one put in this way, "Margaret, do you believe in the forgiveness of sins?" Now when Margaret answers "I do," what does she mean by "I"?

IX. Myself.—Let us consider for a little what this word "I" or "myself" really means. (The teacher should give the class time for *silent* thought, pointing out that it is a difficult matter, and not allowing them to give utterance to hurried or careless expression.) Perhaps the easiest way to begin is to say what *I* am not. First, then, I am *more than my body*. Our bodies are always changing, very slowly but very surely. It is said that in seven years we get an entirely new body, so completely renewed in every part that not one bit of it is the same that it was seven years before. And we are all familiar with the way in which the body alters, so that sometimes we hardly recognise an old acquaintance; but when his *name* is mentioned we realise that it is the *same person* that we knew years ago.

Again, I am *more than my thoughts*. I change my opinions, I travel about and think differently about other countries, or I begin a fresh piece of knowledge, such as botany, and forget others, such as French; I am fond of poetry at one time, and prefer Nature study at another, and so on. Even my very *characteristics* change; I may get more light-hearted and

cheerful, more generous and forgiving, or the contrary. All through all these changes, all along all our life, there is something behind, something that controls and directs and works, something that *is*. It is the self, the person, the I. And although we cannot put our hand on it, nor even describe it easily, this personality of ours is the thing that we are more certain of than anything in the world. I may fancy I see something that is not there, my senses may deceive me, as we say, but nothing can shake my conviction that I am the same person who thought and felt this and that years ago. (Ask the class "Can you ever think of yourself as coming to an end—ceasing to be?")

X. My Soul.—This undying Self is that immortal part of us that God made in His own image, capable of hearing God speak to us, capable of speaking to Him in prayer and praise, capable above all of choosing to serve Him, or refusing to do so. What name do we give to this innermost Self? The class will probably vary in answering, some saying "the Soul," others "the Spirit." Both answers are right, for the words are used by different people or writers to signify the same thing. Ask the class to quote any verse from Scripture where either word is used. Quote: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own Soul?" and "Father, into Thy hands I commend my Spirit."

XI. The Parts of Myself.—It has always been a difficulty to separate clearly in our thoughts the various parts of our Self. For instance, we can distinguish our Feeling from our Doing and from our Thinking. This is a very common division, and is fairly easy to understand, though, as you see, it leaves the real "I" out of it. Then again there is the simple division into "I" (or the Soul), and all the rest (or the body in its widest sense): let the class look at the explanation of the Lord's Prayer in the Catechism, "all things that be needful both for our souls and bodies," where clearly the *whole* is intended. Look again at "My duty towards God." What division is made? Heart, mind,

and soul; for strength would apply to each. In this case the body would be looked on as an instrument for showing our love. Take again the first verse of Hymn 305 (A. and M.), where "body, soul, and spirit" are named as the three parts of the whole self. In this case "soul" is used for mind, as it frequently is in Scripture.

[*Note.*—It is better not to conclude with any hard and fast definition and division of the *Self*, but to leave the class with a knowledge that such divisions are attempted, and with some interest in the question of their own personality, the chief notes being the *difficulty* and *mystery* of the matter. Paragraph XI. should be omitted with a young class.]

XII. My Name and My Soul.—It is our *name* that stands for this Self or Soul, or "I." Let the class turn to the "Benedicite," and notice that after all Creation has been called upon to praise the Lord for ever, leading on to priests, servants of the Lord, spirits and souls of the righteous, holy and humble men of heart, the climax is reached by appealing to each of us by name; for when we say "O Ananias, Azarias, and Misael" it should mean to us our own name and the names of those we know and love.

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Write all you can about your Christian name, such as its meaning, the language it belongs to, some great people who have borne it.
2. Find out some people in the Old Testament whose names were altered, and give the meaning of their later names.
3. Find some instances of Our Lord speaking to people by name (*e.g.* Martha, Simon, Saul, Mary).
4. Look out Psalms ciii. and civ., and notice specially the first and last verses of each. Also Rev. iii. 12.
5. Illuminate Our Lord's name in your book, and write or print under it the verse you like best of

Hymn 176 (A. and M.). Elder pupils might learn instead George Herbert's "Iesu."

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—Make a list of pupils' names, Christian names, and surnames, and find out as much as possible as to their meaning and probable origin. "The Romance of Words" (Weekley), chapter on names.

LESSON VII

Godparents

Introduction.—You have noticed in the Baptismal Service what an important part is taken by the godparents. And the Catechism mentions them at once as givers of the Christian name. Now, we know that it is our father and mother who really choose what our name shall be. What, then, is the object of having these godparents? Is it merely a beautiful old custom that might perhaps be better dropped along with so many others we have mentioned? Certainly not. (Any views on the subject that the children have formed should be freely expressed. Some of the children may be asked to give the names of their own godparents, and, as far as discretion allows, anything that they have done for them. Probably a complete want of thought about the matter will be discovered.)

I. Godparents among the Jews.—The custom of having some one to stand by you at your baptism is a very ancient one. The Jews in baptizing their proselytes (see Lesson V.) used to require three persons to be present to vouch for the good intentions of the convert. The honour of joining the sacred nation was too great to be received lightly or thoughtlessly.

II. The Custom Adopted by Christians.—It is easy to see how this custom would arise in the Early Church. The Apostles, who of course were Jews, would realise that the same precaution should be observed in admitting any one to the Church. We can see how important it was in those early days that no one should be a half-

hearted Christian, or fail to understand what was required of him.

III. Repentance and Faith to be Assured.—Let us see precisely from the Catechism what has always been required for Christian baptism. Let the class read the question "What is required of persons to be baptized?" Two very distinct things: Repentance and Faith. Now the baptism of St. John in the River Jordan was only one of repentance. St. Paul once found during his mission in Asia Minor some disciples who had only received this baptism of St. John, with no demand for belief in Christ; St. Paul baptized them *again* "in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts xix. 1-5).

If this care was taken with grown-up converts, we can see how careful the Church would be over the baptism of infants, careful that they should be brought up to repentance and faith, or, as we should say shortly, to lead a Christian life.

IV. Parents not always able to assure these.—But surely the parents of the child would naturally undertake this duty? Yes, but there are cases when they fail to do so. Of course the most obvious case is when death removes the parents. How did it happen that death or imprisonment frequently removed a Christian parent in early days? If we read some of the accounts of persecutions among the Christians, we cannot help being amazed that the Church lived through such terrible slaughter. Martyred parents left their helpless children to the care of their fellow-Christians. There is a beautiful story of St. Laurence, which tells us that a persecutor required him to give up the treasures of the Church; whereupon he brought forth the sick, the aged, and the *children*, and said, "These are the treasures of the Church." Such was not the kind of treasure the man was seeking, and St. Laurence was put to a terrible death.

V. Parents not always willing.—Then we have the case of the baptism of infants whose parents were heathen. How did the Church come to possess such infants? Perhaps the class know something of the way

in which heathen parents used to abandon children whom they considered weak or in any way discreditable to them. These poor little neglected souls were precious to Christians, and were taken into the Church, cared for, and taught. In addition to these cases of actual orphans, there was always the possibility of a child having parents who cared enough to let him be baptized, but were not sufficiently good Christians to bring him up to repentance and faith.

VI. Responsibility of the Church.—Not only in these cases, but in *every* case of any one being admitted to the Church, it is the duty of the whole Brotherhood or Society to see that the new member is properly taught. Now we know quite well that "what is everybody's duty is nobody's duty," and therefore two or three members of the Church are made directly responsible for the education of each new member. They are called *godparents* because of their connection with the new birth of baptism, and they are the persons specially responsible to the Church for each child.

VII. Sureties.—Notice the other name for godparents, in the later part of the Catechism. (Let one of the class read aloud the question and answer "Why are infants baptized?" Make sure that all understand that the word "both" refers to repentance and faith.) A "surety" is one who is bound to see that the work or promise undertaken or given by another is carried out. For instance, if one man should enter into an agreement to build a bridge, his surety would be a man who undertook that the work of building the bridge should be done. This is a very common thing in business matters, when there is any doubt as to the first man's ability to perform his promise. In baptism, then, the godparents stand as "sureties" that the helpless and unconscious infant shall perform the requirements.

VIII. Sponsors.—Let the scholars find another name still for godparents. They are called "Sponsors," which is merely a Latin word for "Promisers." This brings us to a very definite thing that our godparents did

for us. Read the question "What did your godfathers and godmothers then for you?" (pointing out that "then" means "in your baptism") and the answer, "They did promise and vow three things in my name." What the three things are we will leave for the present, and think a little of what a promise is. A vow is a solemn promise made to God.

IX. The Force of a Promise.—But every promise we make ought to be a solemn one. It is a bad habit to treat everyday promises about little things lightly. The word "promise" should not be used unless strictly meant. For instance, a little child should not be made to promise "not to do it again," and so on, because he cannot understand, easily forgets, and comes to think that the word means very little. We should be *slow* to promise, and never break a promise but for serious and justifiable cause.

> [*Note.*—Children are usually very fond of discussing ethical points, and the teacher should give opportunity and encouragement for such discussions whenever they seem to arise naturally in studying the Catechism. A general question such as "*Why* should a promise be kept?" may induce some of the class to express themselves.]

The Jews as a nation looked upon a promise as very sacred. "He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not" (Ps. xv.) is one of the marks of a man fit to dwell in God's holy hill. The English are the same; we honour a man of his word, a man we can rely on to do what he said he would. Many a character, otherwise good, has been weak in this way. People promise things easily to tide over difficulties, or merely to be amiable, without counting the cost. (Charles I. may be instanced as an upright, religious gentleman, who had, however, never been taught to respect his own word.) The story of Herod and Salome illustrates the point that a promise should be broken if a serious evil would be done by keeping it, or if it never ought to have been made (St. Mark vi. 26).

X. Are we Bound by the Promise of Another?—It may occur to some children, even if they do not express

it, that we ought not to be forced to keep a promise made for us when we had no means of refusing it. The teacher should suggest this to the class, for evidently the Church saw this difficulty, and puts the question directly to the child: "Dost thou not think that thou art bound?" Notice that the question is so worded that the answer "Yes" is invited. But the very fact of the question being put at all shows that we are left free to acknowledge our obligation to perform the promises made on our behalf at our baptism; no one, parent or godparent, can compel us to perform our duty to God. The very best that there is in the whole world is lavished on us, and we are naturally expected to receive it with gladness, but it is not forced on us. Our Lord never forced any one to follow Him; on one occasion He even checked some one who wished to do so without sufficient consideration of the difficulties (St. Luke ix. 57, 58).

XI. How the Catechism Answers this.—The answer given in the Catechism is a very beautiful one, and the teacher should try to make the class feel the beauty of it. There is first the swift certainty of the reply: "Yes, verily"; the words "by God's help" give it the nature of a vow. Then follows a burst of gratitude to "our heavenly Father" for all that has been done for us, summed up in the glorious name of Our Saviour. Then, lastly, a little prayer for God's help (point out that "grace" means help) that we may be worthy of such a great gift.

The whole answer is a foreshadowing of the great **"I do"** of the Confirmation Service. Let the class turn to the "Order of Confirmation" in their Prayer-books, and let one read aloud the Bishop's question, noticing how closely it resembles the one in the Catechism.

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Hymn 271 (A. & M.) to be read or learned.
2. Write down the names of your own godparents. Find out from the Prayer-book how many there should be, and how they differ for boys and girls.

3. Say in your own words why we have godparents.

4. Read St. Luke xiv. 28-32. Find some other words of Our Lord that show us that He requires a whole-hearted and *thoughtful* acceptance of Him.

5. Find in the Bible some of God's promises to us.

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—Discuss the moral importance of a promise. Find any instances from your general reading of a promise being kept to a man's own hindrance (*e.g.* Livingstone's promise to lead his native servants home).

LESSON VIII

A Member of Christ

Introduction.—We have seen that in our baptism we become Christians. We have now to see what is meant by the expression "to be a Christian."

I. The Word "Christian" is, of course, formed from the name Christ, and means, to the ordinary person, a follower of Christ, or one who believes in His teaching. But we know that the word "Christian" means a great deal more. We are not merely followers of a Person Who lived and taught and Who gave His life for us many hundreds of years ago. We are in close connection with a living Person Who is continually giving us of His life.

What is this close connection?

II. Our Selves, our Bodies, and the World.—As you are sitting here now, each one of you is perfectly conscious of, and perfectly certain of, three very distinct things:—

First, there is your *Self* or your "I," that thinks, that chooses to sit still or raise a hand, or speak. It seems like a head-manager of a large and varied business, with ever so many departments, who orders his servants, your limbs, to do what he wants. As we saw in Lesson VI., this inner Self has always been a great mystery to philosophers and other learned men. They all know it is there, but cannot explain it, so they have called it the mysterious I, or the "transcendental ego" ("ego" is only the Latin for I, and "transcendental" means "going beyond" what is seen or felt).

[*Note.*—If once the children have got a clear idea there is no harm in giving them a name for it, and they generally enjoy a term of this kind if it really means something to them.]

Secondly, there is your *body*, with its limbs, its eyes, ears, and so on, ready to carry out whatever the "ego" requires. There is a wonderful system of nerves all through the body, by which each remote part is connected with the brain, the "head office." Messages pass up and down faster than we can realise; a prick in your foot seems known immediately, but the message has to travel along the nerves all the way from the foot to the brain, and the "ego" has to send an order down another nerve from brain to foot for the right movement to be made. The "ego" seems to be aware of every tiny event that happens to the body and to take action at once, to help or to stop.

Thirdly, besides being aware of our own Self and our own body, we are aware of the outside *world*. We know that this is something quite different from our living body; we are not so closely in touch with it; we cannot control it in the same way, we cannot call a book to us; if my finger is cut, the chair I sit on is quite undisturbed, but *I* feel it and order my hand to stop the bleeding with a rag.

III. Our Relation to Christ.—When we were baptized and became Christians the Catechism tells us that we were made a part of the Body of Our Lord, a "limb" of Christ. It seems so great and wonderful a thing that we hardly like to say it, and yet that is the exact meaning of the words, "I was made a member of Christ." Notice that the word "member" is not used in its rather weaker sense, as of some one who joins a society or club, and may have very much or very little to do with its life—we are not called members of the Church only, but members of Christ Himself.

Sometimes my limbs are not perfectly under control; perhaps *I* want to get out of bed, but my limbs do not. *I* want to sit still, but my legs want to fidget. *I* wish to appear calm and collected, but I blush and stutter in spite of myself, as we say. Now, all this helps us a little to understand our relation to Christ. We sometimes do not want to do the very thing that we know He requires of us. It seems strange that He should be

hampered and restricted by our disobedience and wilfulness, and yet this is just the way He has chosen to redeem us and teach us and make us His own and use us for His great purposes. We are in a sense God's hands on earth. The desire to be *wanted* by those we love is very strong in human nature, and there seems nothing higher or more glorious than to be wanted by Christ, to be His limbs or members.

A Hindoo heard a missionary preaching, saying that Christ *wanted* all men. He had intended to offer a sacrifice to one of his gods; there were two gods that he worshipped, one the Creator and the other the Destroyer. "Now," he reflected, "if I offer my sacrifice to the Creator he will not need it, because he can make for himself, and if I offer it to the Destroyer he will only destroy it. I will inquire further about this god of the Christians, who appears to *want* something."

IV. Christ's Relation to us.—The other side of the picture is still stranger. If we are in such close connection with Christ, it follows that He *knows* everything that happens to us, with the same certainty and rapidity that our "ego" knows when anything happens to our body. More wonderful still, He *feels* it, as though the joy and sorrow were His own. We are too apt to think of Christ as far removed in some distant realm of happiness, but He said very plainly that He was *with us* to the end of the world. He said, too, that whenever we did a kind deed to another, we did it to *Him*, and when we neglected to feed the hungry and visit the sick we were leaving Christ Himself hungry and lonely. When Saul the persecutor was laying waste the new and struggling Church, Christ felt every scourging as though done to Himself. "Why persecutest thou Me?" (The passage from Acts can be referred to if not familiar to the class.)

V. Our Relation to one another.—Again, it follows that if we are all members of a living body, we are affected by one *another's* pleasures or troubles. The Church is not like a piece of complicated machinery, where if a screw is acting badly or is taken away, the

rest of the machine neither knows nor feels nor is any the worse. In a living body, one part is intimately connected with the rest, in a way that sometimes seems very mysterious; for instance, if we have a tooth aching, we find it difficult to use our brain; if our digestion goes wrong, we feel depressed and miserable; and sometimes a bad wound or scald in one limb will make the whole body incapable of action for a time. (The class can add illustrations from their own experience.)

This fact, of the body and the various parts of it being so closely united, was once used as a kind of parable or story, to ward off a great danger. It was in very ancient times, when the Romans, who became so great a nation later, were only a little State struggling for existence. The men who did the hard and rough work were sometimes treated cruelly by the Roman nobles, and on one occasion they rebelled and went away, determining to start a new State for themselves. One of the Roman nobles said he would try to bring them back, and went to them and told them this fable. Once upon a time the members of the body grew discontented and revolted against the stomach; why should they toil from morning till night merely to feed the stomach that lay idle? So they agreed to support it no more. The feet vowed they would not move to find food; the hands vowed they would not lift it to the mouth, the teeth that they would not chew it, and so on. For a time they showed much spirit and determination; but soon they all began to languish and found too late that it was the quiet work of the stomach that had given them strength to work and courage to mutiny. The Roman labourers were persuaded by this story to return to their work; it is probable that they had already begun to feel the truth of it.

This very same parable was used by St. Paul to show how the members of the Church depend on one another. He is writing a letter to the people of Corinth (let the class find the passage), and points out to them that a member who has the gift of healing, or one who can preach in a very stirring way, is no more

necessary, no more important, than the humblest. "The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee, nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body which seem to be more feeble, are necessary." Then St. Paul leads them to see that though every one cannot have striking and impressive gifts, there is *one* they can all have, and then follows his grand description of love. The class probably know it very well, but the chapter ought to be read with the one that comes just before, for St. Paul is speaking of love as the greatest gift that all the members of the Church should desire, and a "more excellent way" than endeavouring to shine.

VI. The Vine and the Branches.—The simile used by Our Lord, of the vine (St. John xv.), may be worked out by the class themselves, if they have grasped the foregoing. The various parts of the plant can be named —root, branches, stalks, leaves, fruit. Which part seems the more honourable, beautiful, or valuable? What is the *use* of the leaves, the small stalks, and so on? How is the plant kept alive? What happens to a branch severed from the vine? Lay great stress on the action of the sap. Some of the children may keep plants of their own, and be able to describe the appearance of a withered branch. How do we "graft in" a branch? Describe the way in which the new branch is fastened on to the main plant, and how the wrappings are kept on until the sap flows freely into the new part.

[*Note.*—In treating this much must depend on the teacher's and the children's familiarity with plant life. In some cases the whole simile may best be omitted or merely referred to, and the following analogy worked out instead.]

VII. The Church Compared to a Building.—St. Peter and St. Paul both make use of a building as a picture of the Church. As we look round any beautiful cathedral or other fine building (illustrate from one in the neighbourhood), we are struck by the strength of it, the fitness for its purpose in shape and plan, the beauty of its pillars, arches, window-tracery, roof, and so on. We may be quite sure that there is not a stone or brick

anywhere that is not necessary, probably the stones that we do not see being the most important. There is a story of a bricklayer engaged amongst others in building a high factory chimney; he laid one brick carelessly; and the consequence was that in a storm of wind this one point of weakness caused the fall of the whole chimney. (The class can express the meaning of this parable, or be left to think of it for themselves at any future time. Parables are often more impressive if unexplained.)

When the Church is compared to a building, to what is Our Lord compared? In ancient buildings the "corner-stone" was of very great importance, sometimes a huge block of nearly twenty feet in length and seven feet thick (as in the Temple foundations); sometimes a large angular block that bound the two sides of the building together (as at Nineveh).

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Read 1 Cor. xii. and xiii.; *or*, St. Matt. xxv. 31-46.
2. Say how a living body is different from a machine.
3. Copy out or learn Ephes. ii. 19-22.
4. Candidates for Confirmation should read in this connection the second thanksgiving in the Communion Service.

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—St. John xv.; Rom. xi. 16-24, for the simile of a plant; 1 Peter ii. 4-9; Ephes. ii. 19-22, for the simile of a building.

LESSON IX

The Child of God and an Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven

Introduction.—We are learning from the Catechism what is meant by the word "Christian." Last time we saw that it means being bound up closely in Christ's life. To-day we will think about the other points in the description of a Christian. He is "the child of God," and an "inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven."

I. Home.—Let the children think for a little of what "home" means. Like our health, it is an ordinary, everyday thing, taken for granted; but imagine yourself without it, and nothing seems more precious or desirable. It is at home that all our usual wants are provided for, comfort when we are unhappy, nursing when sick, and so on. At home, too, we are quite at our ease with things about us that we know and people that we love. We all know the pleasure of returning home after a journey, the welcome, the special meal, the going round to see that all is the same. The old song of "Home, sweet home" never fails to charm us. This love of home is very deep-rooted in human nature. Perhaps the most beautiful of all the old Greek stories is a long poem (the "Odyssey") describing how a man spent ten years trying to get back to his wife and son, and though offered immortality, chose to return home in preference.

II. The Church our Home.—Most likely all the members of the class come from happy homes, but they can easily be led to see that many are not so fortunate; some have lost a father, or mother, or both; some have to leave their home early to earn a living, and stay with strangers; and some even are worse than orphans, having parents who neglect them or treat them badly.

But a Christian always has a home. We must, each one of us, try our very best to make the church where we worship a real home to all who come, and this is best done by looking upon it as a home ourselves. We do not go home from school because we ought, but because it is the natural thing to do. In the same way we do not go to church as a *duty*, still less for what we *get*, in the matter of music or sermon, but simply because we are members of God's family, meeting together to worship Him. In a class of more advanced pupils it may be shown how the Church meets this desire for a feeling of home at the great turning-points of our life. Looking over pages of their Prayer-books they will be reminded of how the Church receives us as infants, confirms us when the temptations and difficulties of early life are beginning, visits us when we are ill, consecrates the forming of a new earthly home, lays our bodies to rest in hope at last. To a class preparing for Confirmation special stress should be laid on the homely beauty of the common feast at the Lord's Table, uniting all Christians in one family in a way that nothing else can.

Read these lines to the class:—

> Man's arm is weak, God's arm is strong,
> Man's time is short, God's time is long,
> And God takes care of each one's way,
> And brings us safely home some day.

Or these:—

> Home by different ways. Yet all
> Homeward bound by prayer and praise,
> Young and old and great and small,
> Home by different ways."

III. Christ's Parable of Home.—This deep instinct of a love of home was used by Our Lord to make vivid to us the fact that we are God's children. He described a boy who had a good home and a kind father, but who wanted to go away and look for something more exciting. (Let the class tell how the boy wasted his life, but at last "came to himself," and realised what his home had been; how his father must have been expecting and watching for him, for he saw him a great way off and

ran to meet him.) We must not think of this story as only applying to some one who has fallen very deeply into sin or committed some crime. The father would have been equally forgiving and still happier if his son had come back sooner—the home was always ready, the father always on the watch.

The story is for each of us, whenever we have that miserable feeling of having done something "against heaven." A little girl was once overheard praying "Please love me when I am naughty." It was just this lonely feeling that Our Lord met with this parable. And home is not only for the sinner: the elder brother who had never left home had a far better lot: "*All that I have is thine.*" The confidence and trust and fellow-feeling of his father was far more than a feast for his friends. But he did not realise it.

This brings us to the third point in the description of a Christian: he is not only "a member of Christ" and "the child of God," but also an "inheritor of the kingdom of Heaven."

IV. The Kingdom of Heaven.—What is meant by the "kingdom of Heaven"? Let the class try to express their ideas about it, however simply and crudely. If very little can be obtained, ask them to try to remember anything Our Lord said beginning: "The kingdom of Heaven is like . . ." Put down all that are correctly given on the blackboard, arranging them as they come in groups, thus: (1) Seed growing secretly; a grain of mustard-seed; the leaven. (2) The tares; the net. (3) The pearl; the hid treasure.

[*Note.*—If the teacher finds that he has to supply nearly all these himself it would be well to devote another lesson to the subject, so that the class may study these parables more at leisure.]

V. Its Secret Growth.—When the parables are thus arranged, the class will be able to detect fairly easily the leading point of each group.

(1) The first set shows us that the kingdom of Heaven is living and growing; that its growth is very quiet; that its beginning was so small as to be almost imperceptible.

This exactly describes the life of Christ's Society, or the Church. He gathered a few homely men around Him among the quiet villages of Galilee, and now the same society has members in all parts of the world. The parable also describes the growth of religion in each person. We have seen how the seed is sown in the infant at baptism, and how we are to look for growth, not fruit at once.

[Elder children may appreciate the point that the Church being a *living* and growing thing has been able to adapt itself to all ages and countries and types of civilisation; and also that a person whose religion is strong and *growing* is not afraid of new ideas, nor of applying Christ's great principles of life to new facts.]

VI. Its Present Imperfections.—The parables of the tares and the net are unmistakable in meaning. The kingdom of Heaven here, now, has not reached perfection. There is evil mixed with the good, and in such a complicated way that the two cannot be separated. We are quite aware of it; there are many baptized Christians who are not leading Christian lives; and in our own selves we are aware of how we fall short of what we know to be right. The teacher may here make such suggestions of encouragement or stimulation (according to his relationship with the members of his class) as may be drawn from these parables; *e.g.* growth, though slow, is nevertheless *growth*—no room for despair in the Christian life—need for effort and perseverance, &c.

VII. Its Value.—The extreme shortness of the two parables in the third group contains a great point in itself. It is quite impossible to put into words the value of Christ's religion. If we picture ourselves for a moment without it, there seems nothing worth living for. As you grow older you will feel this more and more, until the parable of the pearl appears a natural description of the value of the kingdom of Heaven.

VIII. Our Inheritance.—And this is what we inherit at baptism. Notice that the word "inheritor" implies that it is a present possession, not a mere future state of happiness. Our Lord very plainly stated on one occasion "The kingdom of God is within you" (St. Luke xvii. 21).

[*Note.*—An elder class may like to know that at one time (1661) it was proposed to change this word "inheritor" to "heir," but the former word was kept, because "heir" refers only to expectation of the future. This incident helps the class to realise the great care taken over the wording of the Catechism.]

In the same way, then, that we are born to the great inheritance of being English, so we are born in baptism to the inheritance of the Church. If we study with joy and pride the doings of great Englishmen, how greatly shall we care to study the history of our Church, and make ourselves worthy of so great an inheritance!

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Read again carefully the parable of the Prodigal Son (St. Luke xv.).

2. Learn the following lines of the "Ancient Mariner":—

O sweeter than the marriage feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company.

To walk together to the kirk
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men and babes and loving friends
And youths and maidens gay!

3. Write out and learn by heart any *one* of the parables of the kingdom of Heaven.

4. Copy into your note-book and learn the first two questions and answers in the Catechism.

References on the kingdom of Heaven, St. Matt. xiii. 31, 33, 44, 45, 52; St. Luke xvii. 21; Col. i. 12, 13; Rom. vii. 19.

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—Read the lines "Under the wide and starry sky," by R. L. Stevenson.

Read "Imitation of Christ," iii. 37 on giving all for all.

Read Keble's "Rosebud" (Lent, IV.) on the secrecy of religious growth.

Read "The Gospel of Pain," by Thomas Hardy, on the Church as our home.

LESSON X

The Flesh

Introduction.—When we were made Christians we promised to perform the special duties enjoined on all the members of the Church, just as a king at his coronation makes a solemn vow to govern the kingdom according to its laws. Let one pupil read aloud from the Catechism the question and answer beginning "What did your godfathers . . . my life." Notice the three chief words: "renounce," "believe," "keep." Now turn to the later part of the Catechism, on the Sacraments. Let one pupil read aloud the question and answer beginning "What is required of persons to be baptized?" Notice that in this case only *two* duties are named—repentance and faith. Let the class discuss this apparent contradiction. They can be led to suggest that repentance involves both renouncing evil and intending to keep to the good, so that the two answers are really the same. (Account for the difference in wording by referring to the later authorship of the part on the Sacraments. See Lesson II.)

We have first to consider, then, what a Christian must *give up*.* To put it quite shortly, we must give up or renounce any service to the enemy. We saw in the Baptismal Service, and we may notice in several places in Scripture, the life of the Christian described as a battle. Whom or what have we to fight?

[*Note.*—The order of the renunciation has been altered, to make the ideas easier to the children. From the *obvious* body to the *unseen* enemy is a more natural line of thought

* The word *renounce* has a defiant ring in it, a contempt for the foe (Is. xxxvii. 22); contrast with feebleness of Lot's wife and Balaam.

than *vice versâ*. The Catechism has arranged them in order of importance, and this should be the final form for committing to memory, but the psychological order is the best to follow in working out the ideas.]

I. The Discipline of the Flesh.—Get the class to express their ideas as to what the "flesh" means in this place. At various times in the history of the world we find man at war with his own body, trying to subject it, mortify it, punish it, and so on. And for various motives. The Greeks used to deny their bodies for the sake of excelling in *games*. The word "ascetic" is Greek, and simply means a man in training as an athlete. (A class of boys will know how much training of this kind is done to-day, for sports.) Then, the famous Stoics in Athens used to fast and deny themselves in order that they might feel the strength of a wise and self-sufficing *mind*. But the greatest number of ascetics have been religious men, who desired to mortify their body, to assist the life of their *soul*. Ask the class for any instances of which they have heard or read. Any of the following may be merely referred to, or enlarged upon, as time permits, or the interest of the class directs.

The priests of *Baal* on Mount Carmel (1 Kings xviii. 28). The Ancient *Egyptians* used to beat themselves at the annual festival of their goddess Isis. At one of the *Roman* feasts it was the custom for priests to run through the streets with leather thongs whipping all whom they met. *Spartan* youths were flogged every year before the altar of the goddess, and counted it weakness to show that they felt the pain.

The history of Christianity provides cases without number of people who have given up every form of bodily indulgence and lived only on the merest necessities. Among these perhaps the most famous is *St. Simeon Stylites*, a Syrian monk of the fifth century, who tried to get further from a sinful world and nearer heaven by placing himself on the top of a column, first of nine feet and finally of sixty feet in height. Here he lived for thirty years, through heat and cold; here he stood, knelt, sang and prayed, and gave exhortations to thousands

who thronged to hear him; he converted many to Christianity and made peace between enemies. The *Flagellants* of the Middle Ages: these were brotherhoods who at various times (especially on the occasion of a plague or other public disaster) made pilgrimages from town to town in Europe, whipping themselves with leather thongs, and singing penitential psalms. It is said that at first they roused numbers of people to lead better lives, but later on there was much disorder caused by them. In modern times we still have bodies of people who deny themselves systematically all their lives, although not in these crude and extreme forms. Some monks and nuns lead a secluded life of prayer and contemplation, eat no meat, lie on hard beds, have no unnecessary furniture, and so on; while others go about among the poor and sick. The Hindoo fakir, who holds his arm up till it becomes useless, and a sect of Persian Mahomedans who devote their lives to abstinence and meditation, may be given as instances from other religions.

II. Our Lord's Teaching on Self-Denial.—Let the class discuss the *pros* and *cons* of such a life. Because we cannot all do it, is no reason why some should not, if they feel they can serve Christ better in this way. But Our Lord's life makes it quite clear that such extreme self-denial is not *demanded* of us. Let the class name some occasions on which Our Lord was present at a feast. (The marriage in Cana, the dinner with St. Matthew, with Simon the Pharisee, the supper at Bethany, the last Passover.)

Notice, however, the high praise given to John the Baptist; and the important verses St. Luke vii. 31-35 should be in the teacher's mind, although not necessarily quoted; also St. Mark ix. 29.

Quote the substance of Our Lord's words given in St. Mark ix. 43-48. Let the class have time to express their ideas as to the meaning of this passage. Lead them to see what a tremendous fight it sometimes has to be; and although we cannot foresee now what our special fight will be, we can prepare ourselves every day, so as to be ready when the difficulty comes.

Speak of "Fasting"; let the children find the Table of Fast Days in their Prayer-books; discuss the reasons for "Fasting" at special times; remind the children that special times are only reminders of the general duty of self-control at all times.

III. The Lusts of the Flesh.—There is an expression in the Catechism on this point that needs to be translated into modern English. Instead of the "lusts of the flesh" we should now say "the wishes, or desires, of the body." Let the class instance some of these: hungry, the body wants food; cold, it wants warm clothes and shelter; tired, it wants rest; sick, it wants medical care.

It is quite clear that all these are natural and right, and in speaking of the sinful lusts of the flesh, the Catechism does not mean that *all* are sinful. Take any of those just mentioned, and imagine what happens when we give our body either *more* than it really requires, or greater *variety* and *luxury* than it really requires. In the matter of food and drink, a sufficient amount and a pleasant variety are needed for health, but over-eating and indulgence in special kinds of eating and drinking are sinful. In clothes, we can coddle ourselves with too many or indulge in fanciful styles. Taking more rest than we want, and at the wrong end of the day, easily becomes laziness. It seems strange, but people are even known to indulge in illness and doctors. Such a form of indulgence is not likely to tempt you now; but this brings us to an important point.

IV. Temptations Vary at Different Ages.—A very insistent desire of the body at one time of our life will seem small or even ridiculous at another. Boys and girls of your age would smile if I spoke of over-indulgence in sweets. To little children this is a real temptation. Now, as you grow older, you will find at the different stages of your life special temptations to indulge the body; you will recognise them as they come; and fortunately they have not all to be fought with at once; some may never attack you at all, for people vary very much in this matter, and we must never be hard in judging others, who perhaps have a much severer

struggle than we have over some bodily weakness. (Let the teacher refer to the terrible state of slavery to which a drunkard has sunk, as an illustration.) Later on, when we come to consider the *duty* of a Christian (namely, what he has to do rather than what he has to renounce), we shall come back to this question of the "flesh" or body and what we owe to it.

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Read St. Matt. vi. 16-18; 1 Cor. ix. 24-27; St. Mark ix. 43-48.
2. Write a short essay on Fasting, giving your own ideas about it.
3. Learn George Herbert's "Man" (first and last two verses).
4. Find some characters in the Bible who fasted.
5. Think over how you might help a younger child to master any bodily temptation.

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—"Builders of the Church and Prayer-Book," Lesson XV., gives a description of the ascetic St. Jerome. Read Browning's "Rabbi Ben Ezra" (noting verse xii.). Think over the question of fasting in general, and the various ways, besides the matter of food, in which it can be carried out.

LESSON XI

The World

Introduction.—We have seen that a Christian is expected to command and control his *body*, not to become enslaved to its demands. We must next consider what is expected of him with regard to the *world* around him. Let the class turn to the words of the baptismal promise and notice the phrase

I. "This Wicked World."—Ask the class to consider what the Catechism means by these words. Suggest that they should try to recall any words of the Bible about "the world." The following passages are selected as being most familiar, and therefore most likely to be quoted by the children; if they do not recall any easily, these should be read to them; in most cases, if the teacher begins, the class will be able to carry on the quotation. Before reading them, the teacher should ask the class to notice any difference in meaning attached to the word "world." (Each scholar might make a sentence with the word "world" in it.)

Ps. xxii. 27. "All the ends of the world shall remember . . ."
Ps. xc. 2. "Before Thou hadst formed the world."
St. John iii. 16. "God so loved . . ."
St. John viii. 12. "I am the Light . . ."
St. John xiv. 22. "How is it that Thou wilt manifest . . ."
St. John xvi. 33. "In the world ye shall have . . ."
St. John xviii. 36. "My kingdom is not of this world."
James i. 27. "Pure religion . . ."
1 John v. 4. "This is the victory."
St. Mark iv. 19. "The cares of this world choke . . ."
St. John xiv. 27. "Peace I leave with you . . ."

From such passages as these at least three distinct meanings are attached to the word: first, the whole

creation (pronounced "very good" in Gen. i.); secondly, all men; thirdly, something evil, something opposed to Christ. It is evidently in this last sense that the word is intended in the Catechism. Let us, then, consider more closely what it is we are called upon to renounce.

II. "Pomps and Vanity."—Ask the class to repeat the exact wording of the Catechism in this place. We are "to renounce the pomps and vanity of this wicked world." Let them give their opinion as to what this means. They will probably say "the outward shows and emptiness," or some such set explanation of the words. Then let them take paper and pencil and write down a few definite things that they consider would come under the head of pomps and vanity to be renounced. The answers will be exceedingly various, according to the age, sex, and social surrounding of the particular children. Perhaps they may suggest some of these: theatres, music-halls, dancing, playing cards, horse-racing, parties, fairs, &c.

Quite clearly no encouragement must be given to any such indiscriminate ticketing of popular amusements and pleasures as worldly. Hardly any of them are in themselves necessarily and always bad. Almost all of them may be innocently enjoyed. But almost all of them, and some more than others, are apt to have associations tending towards sin, and in so far as we find that by indulgence in any of them we are drawn in the direction of sin we must put them aside and go without them. A well-known writer (Charles Lamb) was once in very great trouble, so great that he was almost in danger of losing his reason. The care of his old father was apt to worry him, and in order to prevent this, a friend of his used to play cards with the old man all day long, giving up all his leisure to do so. This story (or some similar one from the teacher's reading or experience) will show the class that the act of playing cards is in no sense wrong in itself, any more than playing dominoes, while, of course, if it leads to gambling, it is a terrible snare. The same consideration will apply to nearly all that are mentioned. The pomp and display at the coronation of

a king may be right and appropriate; dancing may be a healthy and innocent recreation; occasional feasting together encourages happy friendships. Remember that Our Lord attended a marriage and other feasts, and allowed the people to bring Him to Jerusalem with triumphant shouting.

We come to the conclusion, then, that there are few, if any, definite things that we can conveniently label as "worldly," and therefore to be renounced, but that it is the spirit in which we deal with things of the world that really matters.

III. Our Lord's Words on Renunciation.—Now let us see what Our Lord says about renouncing things. "He that forsaketh not all that he hath, cannot be My disciple." "All that he hath" covers everything, and lest we should be making exceptions, Our Lord mentions besides our means of livelihood (refer to the disciples' abandonment of their boats and nets), our father and mother. What does this mean? It cannot mean that *every one* must give away everything and retire from his fellow-men. It *may* mean that for some people—refer to the brotherhoods and sisterhoods of the present day—the monks and nuns of olden time—the self-sacrifice of missionaries, &c. Evidently it must mean that our *feeling* towards all that we possess must be an absolute readiness to part with it the moment it is necessary to do so. We must give everything we have to Christ, to dispose of as He thinks best. If it is left to us, He means us to keep it and use it rightly. If it is lost to us, we are better without it. Sometimes we feel that some pleasure is taking up too much of our time and making us selfish. We ought to drop it or curtail it. "If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out."

John Ruskin was once asked by some young people of your age to give them some rules to conduct their lives wisely. He advised them to say every morning after their prayers: "He that forsaketh not all that he hath, cannot be My disciple." In this way they would gradually get into the habit of looking upon all their possessions as only theirs for the time,

and if they broke a favourite cup or spoiled a best dress, they would bear it with great calm and good temper. It is just over these tiny things in life that we can practise our souls to behave rightly when bigger difficulties come later on, and the habit of sitting loosely to our possessions gives us a peculiar feeling of freedom.

IV. Our Lord's Words about Riches.—If we look at the world around, we shall be surprised how very much attention is given to money-making, to getting on in the world. It is the special temptation of industrious, honest people, who begin by being merely prudent and thrifty and gradually become slaves to their belongings. Sometimes nothing short of getting rid of all will free a man from this slavery. Let the class tell the story of the rich young ruler. Point out that he was a good man, and that Jesus loved him. Notice also that the command "Sell all that thou hast" was not spoken to every one, but to this particular man. (The teacher can use this opportunity to warn the children against taking words of Our Lord by themselves, without regarding the time and occasion on which they were spoken.)

Let the class contribute some other words of Our Lord on this subject. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Explain that mammon is used for love of money and worldly goods, the god of "Getting-on," as it has been called. A man *cannot* serve God and mammon; he cannot do his best work (and remember that all good work is "serving God") if he is thinking chiefly of the money to be made by it. Illustrate by reference to a doctor who thinks about the bone he is setting rather than the fee he is to have.

"It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of Heaven." A rich man was once in a shipwreck. He arranged all the money he had with him in bags round his waist, and jumped out to swim ashore. Soon the weight of gold pulled him down. Now, when he was drowning, did he have the money, or did the money have him? It is not only in such a case as this that

the money *owns* the man, but throughout his life it may choke his generous feelings, till he may possibly become the man *miser*able beyond all others—the miser.

Recall the parable of the Sower (St. Matt. xiii. 22). What were the thorns that grew up with the corn and choked it? Notice that care and worry are as disastrous as wealth. Notice, too, how slowly and deceitfully the soul is choked by them.

Read aloud the parable of the man who built greater barns (St. Luke xii. 16). Do not explain it, but allow the terrible simplicity of this wonderful parable to impress the children as it stands.

V. Our Lord's Words on Care and Worry.—Refer again to the parable of the Sower, and quote St. Matt. vi. 25, "Take no thought . . ." Does this mean that we are to give no consideration whatever to the means of living? Certainly not, for that would be the height of selfishness, throwing the trouble of feeding and clothing us on to some one else. We saw that some words have changed in meaning since the Catechism was written and the Bible was translated. To "take thought" is an instance of this: it used to mean to "worry." Shakespeare uses the word in this sense (*e.g.* "Take thought and die for Cæsar"). The Revised Version and other modern translations say "Do not be anxious." We all know how different worry is from work, and to tell a person not to worry by no means forbids forethought and prudence.

Our Lord's first blessing fell upon the poor in spirit. It is quite clear that a rich man may be poor in spirit, and a poor man quite the reverse; it all depends on the way in which each person, no matter what his position is, *regards his worldly goods.*

VI. The Christian's Duty.—What is a Christian's duty with regard to amusements and pleasure? The best plan is never to hunt after amusement, but to be always ready to be amused and to amuse others.

> Each had his tale to tell and each
> Was anxious to be pleased and please.

We must remember, too, that the best of everything is generally free to all. Let the scholars give examples.

> At the devil's booth are all things sold,
> Each ounce of dross costs its ounce of gold;
> For a cap and bells our lives we pay,
> Bubbles we buy with a whole soul's tasking;
> 'Tis heaven alone that is given away,
> 'Tis only God may be had for the asking;
> No price is set on the lavish summer,
> June may be had by the poorest comer. (LOWELL.)

The teacher might conclude by calling the scholars' attention to the wonderful words of St. John in his first Epistle, ii. 15-17, and to those of the Collect for the Fourth Sunday after Trinity.

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Learn by heart St. Mark viii. 35, 36, 37.
2. Write out the parable of the man who built greater barns.
3. Name some things that you yourself enjoy that cost nothing.
4. Learn the verse of Lowell's quoted above.
5. Describe any character you have heard or read about that illustrates this lesson.
6. What does the phrase the "deceitfulness" of riches mean? (Mark iv. 19.)

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—Read Ruskin's "Crown of Wild Olive," chapter on "Work," paragraphs 32, 33, 34. His "Letter to Young Girls," quoted above, appeared in "Fors Clavigera," but has been reprinted as a separate leaflet.

Study the character of Judas as depicted in the different Gospels.

The story of "Silas Marner" might be used to illustrate the lesson.

LESSON XII

The Devil and all his Works

Introduction.—Remind the class of the three things we are aware of (Lesson VIII., Part II.)—our souls, our bodies, and the world around. We have been speaking in the last two lessons of how to fight the temptation of our bodies and the temptations of the world. To-day we must think of the most difficult of all, the temptations that come to our souls or spirits.

I. "**Tempted of Satan.**"—Remind the scholars of Our Lord's temptation in the wilderness. There the evil suggestions, we are told, came from *outside*—from the Devil. "He was there in the wilderness forty days—tempted of Satan." Let the scholars turn to St. Matt. iv. 1-11, and note how Our Lord meets these temptations—these evil suggestions. He meets them with a good thought—a thought of God. Let the scholars discover in each of the three cases the evil thought suggested by the Devil, and the good thought by which it was overcome. Refer to Our Lord's rebuke to St. Peter, and let the scholars once again point out the evil thought and the good thought by which it was overcome.

Our Lord tells us very little about the Evil One. Sometimes people have tried to imagine what the Evil One is. Refer to Apollyon in "The Pilgrim's Progress"; to pictures of St. George and the Dragon; to the representation of the Devil in old pictures and plays as a terrible being with horns and teeth. As we grow older, we shall find many questions puzzling us about these things and about the problem of evil itself. How did it come into the world? How did the Evil One come to be? We do not know; Our Lord did not tell us. It does not really matter. Why?

When a child catches an infectious disease, does it matter much to him where and how he caught it? The important thing is to get rid of the disease. So evil has come into the world. We see it all around us. We know it in ourselves. How can we get rid of it? For we promised at our baptism to renounce the Devil and all his works, and the works of the Devil are plain. Every one of us knows what it is to be tempted. We all know that there is a fight, and a daily fight, for every Christian, all the more difficult because the enemy is unseen and the works of the Devil are many. The problem for all of us is how to resist.

II. Resisting the Devil.—This is a problem which every one of the children in the class will most certainly have already begun to face for himself. They will have a good deal of spiritual experience, although it may not very easily express itself in words. The teacher also, it is assumed, will have considerable spiritual experience, and if the relationship of the teacher with the class be a right one—that is, if the teacher have succeeded in becoming really *friendly* with the class, and they do not suspect any desire to "improve the occasion" on his part—the children will (experience has shown) talk quite freely and seriously of temptations that they have encountered and ways that they have found helpful in resisting. The teacher should, of course, meet the children, as it were, half way, by giving any sincere examples that he can of his own discoveries—*e.g.* by prayer, turning the attention, &c. "I always find a difficulty in ——, and I have found this rather helpful. I wonder what you found?" A real bit of personal experience is always impressive given sincerely. He should, of course, be very careful not to press for any experiences that are not willingly given.

The teacher should avoid making any references to examples of faults in the children's conduct which have come at all *recently* under his notice, as that may very likely introduce an uncomfortable element into the relationship, and by infringing the child's natural reserve lead him to draw back into himself. It is, of course,

just possible that there may be a child in the class who may be inclined to be too communicative with regard to his experiences. Such a case will require tactful handling. On the one hand he should not be unduly or harshly repressed; on the other, he should not be unhealthily encouraged. As examples are suggested either by the teacher from his own experience or by members of the class, the teacher may find it helpful to dwell in thought upon one or two to a rather greater degree than on the rest. Ill-temper or ill-will will probably be a very common temptation to both scholar and teacher. Also despair—*i.e.* giving up trying—and especially at this stage it is not unlikely that some may have felt temptations to morbid curiosity. Some suggestions are therefore appended below as to the way in which the teacher may lead the class to think about these three temptations and how they may be resisted:—

(*a*) *Anger*, or *Ill-will*, is a very terrible "work of the devil." It takes many forms.

We ascribe unkind motives to another person's actions; we are ready to be hurt and to quarrel on the least excuse; if we do not check it, we get to wish evil to another, which is called "malice." We must try to fill our minds with the good that there is in others, and remember that to overcome ill-feeling is a really glorious conquest. The wise man of the Old Testament times said: "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city" (Prov. xvi. 32). And in the last book of the Bible we have this: "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son" (Rev. xxi. 7). These two verses it would be well to learn by heart, so that they come to our mind often at the very moment of temptation; this little verse of poetry written in our own times may help us too:

> There is so much bad in the best of us,
> And so much good in the worst of us,
> That it hardly behoves any of us
> To talk about the rest of us. (R. L. STEVENSON.)

In learning by heart good poetry and reading good books, we are really following Our Lord's own example, as you will easily see if you read the account of His temptation. Refer again to the "victorious good thought" which drives out the bad. "Whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things."

The teacher might read the following passage to the class as an example of different ways of successfully resisting temptation.

Extract from "The Little Flowers of St. Francis of Assisi":—

"Brother Giles, and Brother Simon of Assisi, and Brother Juniper being on a time gathered together to discourse of God and of the salvation of the soul, quoth Giles unto the other brothers, 'How do ye deal with temptations to sin?' Quoth Brother Simon: 'I think on the vileness and the shame of sin, and a strong hatred thereof taketh hold on me, and so I escape.' Quoth Brother Ruffino: 'I throw myself down upon the ground and continue in prayer, calling on the mercy of God . . . until I feel myself wholly freed.' Replied Brother Juniper: 'When I am 'ware of the tumult of the devilish suggestions of the flesh, at once I run and shut the door of my heart, and, for the safety of the fortress of my heart, I occupy myself in holy meditations and holy desires: so that, when the carnal suggestion cometh or knocketh at the door of my heart, I answer, as it were, from within: "Begone, for the lodging is already ta'en, and no more folk may enter here within"; and thus no evil thought is suffered to find entrance within my heart: so that, seeing itself conquered, it departs, as it were, discomfited, not only from me, but from all the country round.'"

(*b*) *Morbid Curiosity.*—Sometimes even curiosity may become a work of the devil. Your teachers are always doing their best to encourage your curiosity, your desire for knowledge; and perfectly rightly. At the same time, curiosity may be wrong; it may be carried in a wrong

direction. Temptation to increase our knowledge in some wrong direction is particularly dangerous, because it has all the air of righteousness. How are we to decide what curiosity is right and what wrong? There is very seldom any difficulty. Suppose we are told that a certain book is horrible and ghastly; let us not read it. We are about to be told a story that is said to be not very nice; let us ask not to have it, or slip away quietly. At any rate do not let it stay in our mind a moment; forget it. *The knowledge that we really need will come to us in due time.* We must remember that there are ever so many things in life that it is quite right and necessary for *some* people to know, but neither right nor pleasant for *all* people to know. A very good plan about a book of which we are doubtful is to put it aside till we are twenty-five years old. It can always wait, and by that time our characters will be stronger and our judgment more sensible.

(*c*) *Despair.*—Perhaps the worst work of the Devil is the temptation to hopelessness, to feel that we are always failing and that it is no use trying any more. We are all of us falling short continually, and the general confession at Morning Prayer is always appropriate, but the particular glory of our being members of Christ is that new life is always coming to us, and we are always starting afresh, always trying. The lowest depth that Christian reached in his Progress was when Giant Despair locked him up in Doubting Castle.

II. Temptation not Itself Sin.—We must always remember that to be tempted is not the same thing as to sin, and it is possible to take too low a view of ourselves; if we really hate the moments when we have been untruthful, then we are essentially truthful; if we hate the moments when evil thoughts have come to us, then we are in mind pure; if we hate the thought of the unkind words we have spoken, then our heart is really kind.

IV. Importance of Spiritual Sins.—We have already found a great many of Our Lord's words against the "world" and the dangers of riches; but

as for the sins of the spirit, the work of the Devil in our inmost selves, we could not count up Our Lord's words against these. Kindness, generosity, peace-making, purity of heart, love in every form is His great theme, and His severest words are directed against those who were deceiving themselves by counting themselves to be righteous and despising others. We now see why the Catechism places the fight with the Devil *first* in order of importance. Let the class repeat the renunciations once more.

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Read Ephes. vi. 10-18.
2. Look up the clauses in the Litany beginning "From all evil . . . " and "From all blindness . . . " and notice how they bear on this lesson.
3. Learn by heart the first anthem for Easter Day.
4. Copy and learn in the Church Catechism the following questions and answers: "What did your godfathers . . . lusts of the flesh."
5. Copy out Phil. iv. 8.
6. Find some references to the Devil in the Gospels.
7. In what way is St. Peter's life an example to us against despair?
8. Learn the Collect for the Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity.

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—"Some Elements of Religion" (Lecture IV.), Liddon; Articles on "Devil" or "Satan" in any Dictionary of the Bible or encyclopædia. Think over what would be the best "Works of the Devil" to bring before your particular class.

Look up a copy of "Paradise Lost," and if possible take it to the class to show them. A short extract might be read—*e.g.* Book II., lines 345 ff.

Macbeth is a wonderful study of the gradual spiritual decay of a prayerless soul.

LESSON XIII

The Mystery of Our Faith

Introduction —It was the custom in the Early Church for those who came to be baptized to turn towards the West, or setting sun, while they renounced the devil and all his works, the world, and the flesh. Then, facing round to the East, the place of the rising sun and the emblem of new life, they recited the Creed. We shall now be quite glad to do the same, to turn our backs for a while on our consideration of the evil to be renounced and examine the "Articles of our belief."

I. What Belief is.—Obtain suggestions from the class as to what the word "believe" means. Let each scholar give a sentence using the word. In which cases can we use the word "know" instead? Let the class discuss. Belief is quite a different thing from knowledge. The two words are used inaccurately sometimes, and very often belief and knowledge are so near as to be confused. We can, however, see the difference easily by a few examples. I *know* that six and eight make fourteen; I *know* that the sun is shining; I *know* that my coat is blue, and so on. (Each pupil can make a statement of this kind, if the class is small.) The number of things we *know* is quite trifling compared with the number we are quite content to *believe*, and, in consequence, *to act upon*. Belief, or faith, or reliance, carries us through the day. We buy some tea at a shop, and drink it, in perfect faith that it is not some poisonous herb. We rely on our father to provide a home, and on our mother to provide meals. We ask a stranger the way, and follow his guidance. We jump into a train with so much belief in the skill of driver and guard that we hardly give it a thought. The

whole of Society, or our way of living together, is built on this belief in one another, and reliance on one another's good faith. Your fathers will tell you that business could not be carried on at all without *credit*, and that is the same thing.

Again, if you think of it, our so-called knowledge of history and geography is really belief. Most of us do not *know* that there is such a place as Australia; none of us *know* that Napoleon existed; we believe it on very strong evidence.

II. Mystery of Everyday Things.—The distinction between belief and knowledge comes home to us more when we are puzzled. We catch a cold, and believe it is because the weather changed, while a friend believes it was because we sat on grass, or were out late, and so on. The words "How curious!" "I wonder why," are continually on our lips, about little things and big things. As a poet has said, man is "girt round with dreadful mysteries." The fact that mysteries are common does not make them any less mysterious. A man was once asked to show something wonderful, and he replied, "Certainly I will, if you will first show me something that is *not* wonderful." (For instance, wireless telegraphy is not the least bit more wonderful than the fact that you hear a person speaking. The class may be invited to name anything that is *not* wonderful, and the teacher should suggest the wonder underlying it.)

At the same time, although we feel things to be mysterious, we are quite convinced that there is a *reason* for everything that happens. Boys and girls of your age are always hunting for the reason of things; and a healthy habit it is.

III. Deeper Mysteries of Life.—As you grow older you begin to find that there are some things you can never understand—such as *life* itself and what it is; our *thought* or our memory, what it is, and where it is while we are asleep, or unconscious in a faint, or stunned by a blow; our *love* for one another; the marvellous *instincts* of animals, such as the homing of pigeons, the nest-building of birds. With all these unexplained yet

obvious facts around us, if you meet a person who says, "I will believe nothing that I cannot understand," you may safely suppose him to be either very young and inexperienced, or else very foolish. It is not the wicked man but the fool who says in his heart "There is no God."

Read the class this fable: "A bookworm, who had gone through a whole folio, was asked by a moth what he thought of it. His answer was that he thought it would have been better without the text; he had kept, however, to the margin, which, fortunately, was entirely blank. Upon this the moth said that she had often wondered, sailing round at night, why the light of candle or lamp was made to fall on each page, and why the watcher's eye seemed to follow each line; perhaps there was more in a book than they thought. To this the bookworm replied that in this matter he claimed to be something of a specialist; a book, he could assure her, was made of nothing but paper and ink; there was no room, therefore, for anything else." (From "Fireside Fables," by E. P. Barrow.)

IV. The Mystery of Religion.—If our common life of every day is full of mysteries, how much more shall we expect the great ideas of our religion to be mysterious—the answers to such questions as, How did we come here? Why are we here? Where are we going? Shall we ever see again those who have died and left us? But, although mysterious, we shall expect the answers to these questions, just as in those of common life, to be *reasonable*. (The teacher should impress on the class that faith and reason are never opposed.)

Perhaps you never thought before how dreadful it would be to have *no* answers to these great questions. From earliest ages men have tried to answer them. Every religion has been an attempt to answer them. But until Christ came there was (in spite of many grand and noble ideas) an uncertainty and sadness in all of the answers to them.

V. Revelation.—Now let us turn and look at the Articles of our belief. Those few sentences that you can

cover with the palm of your hand are among the most glorious things in the world. They are God's own answer to man's age-long questions. They are what we call "revelation," or facts told us that we could never find out for ourselves. It was Christ Who revealed them to us, and each Christian heartily replies "I believe them." Thus we call these facts the Creed, because the first word is "credo" or "I believe." (The class will be able to say why the word is Latin.)

VI. The Creed one of our Chief Possessions.—This Creed, then, is at the very heart and centre of our Christianity. For this we are ready to die. It is this that the martyrs *have* died for. In the terrible days of persecution it was made so easy for the Early Christians to dishonour their creed. "All you have to do," the persecuting heathen would say, "is to throw a few grains of incense on this altar to Jupiter; we shall know then that you are no true Christian." We can imagine how great the temptation was. But thousands preferred to die. It is for this reason that the Creed has been compared to a flag that has been carried triumphantly through many a battle, all the more honoured because tattered and blood-stained. (Perhaps some of the class have seen such a flag hanging in a cathedral. The flag that waved over the Residency at Lucknow throughout the whole siege will serve also as an illustration.) There have been battles of another kind, too, round our Creed, that I hope to tell you something about next time.

VII. How we Honour the Creed.—In all the services of the Church the utmost honour is given to the Creed. Let the class turn to the Order for Morning or Evening Prayer, and notice first the *position* of the Creed. It is placed in the very centre, between the service of praise and the service of prayer. It seems to sum up all that the Psalms, Moses, the prophets, and the New Testament bear witness to; and it prepares for prayer, because faith in Christ is the foundation of prayer.

Now notice the *rubric* in front of the Creed. It is to be "sung or said"; when these words are used in this order, it is intended that it is preferable to *sing*

it. Of course, when there are very few present it could not easily be sung, but in the case of an ordinary congregation it ought to be sung, so as to give it a joyful and triumphant significance.

Next, it is to be sung by *minister and people*—that is, by every one. Whatever else in the service we may fail to join in, we must never fail here. Again, it must be sung *standing*. (Let the class suggest the reason for this.) There are two ideas symbolised by this attitude. First, it was to emphasise the central fact, Christ's resurrection from the dead; and, secondly, it was to remind all Christians that they must be ready to "stand up" for their faith, to defend it.

Perhaps the class have noticed some other ways in which the congregation honour the Creed, although churches vary in these matters. Turning to the East is symbolic of our hope of Christ's second coming, and the life everlasting. Bowing at the human name of Our Lord is a custom that has come to us from the earliest age of the Church and is quite general, no matter where the name occurs, but in the Creed it has the special significance of belief in the Godhead of Christ.

Let the teacher describe how the Crusaders used to stand in line, facing towards Jerusalem, to recite the Creed, with their swords drawn and held aloft to show the sign of the cross.

Remind the class of how the candidates for baptism in the Early Church were given a copy of the Creed as the most precious possession; and also of how our little English children of long ago went about with the same precious words in the horn-book dangling at their belt.

When we next "rehearse the Articles of our belief" let us try to feel that we are members of a great host, a multitude that no man can number, who have in this way honoured Our Lord for nearly two thousand years.

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Make as beautiful a copy as you can of the Apostles' Creed, count the Articles, and put each capital in colour if possible.

2. Read Hebrews xi. Write down five of the names in this roll of honour of whom you could tell the story.

3. In what various ways is the Creed reverenced? In what part of the church building is it sometimes written up?

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—Think out the question how far a man's conduct depends on his belief; distinguish carefully between what a man believes and what he says he believes.

Notice carefully the practices in the recitation of the Creed observed in your own church.

Read Bacon's essay on "Atheisme." Portions of this might be read or shown to an elder scholar (such as the sentence beginning "Atheists will ever be talking").

LESSON XIV

How the Creed Came to Us

Introduction.—To-day we are going to consider how we came to have the "Creed," and to trace its history as far as we can. Of course, you all know that it is not to be found in the Bible, as the Lord's Prayer and the Commandments are. Let the class be asked if they ever thought where the Creed came from. Some will perhaps answer "From the Apostles."

I. "The Apostles' Creed."—In one sense, this title is perfectly right. The Creed states the truths that the earliest Apostles taught, or their "doctrine" as it was called. (Read aloud Acts ii. 42.) "Doctrine" is only another word for "teaching." (If necessary, a few illustrations can be given of this: how they preached that Jesus was the Son of God, the Resurrection, forgiveness of sins.)

In another sense, however, this title may be misleading. We are not to suppose that the Apostles actually composed the Creed in the form in which we now have it; still less are we to suppose that they *wrote* it.

II. Early Creed not Written Down.—It may surprise you to know that we do not find the Apostles' Creed *written down* exactly as it now is for hundreds of years after the time of the Apostles.

> [*Note.*—Traces of the Apostles' Creed appear in the writings of the Early Fathers, but there is no *evidence* of its having been used in its entirety till after the Council of Nicæa.]

We live in an age when everything of importance is

written, and printed in thousands of copies, that all may have it. It requires some effort to imagine the days when people wrote very little, and trusted a great deal to their memory. (The teacher should take some pains to impress this important point, illustrating it from any of the following that the class can best appreciate: the old Greek stories and poems of Homer were sung and well known long before they were written; the Bible stories of Noah, Abraham, and Joseph were not written till centuries after the death of the patriarchs; the old stories of King Arthur and his knights, and the folk-lore of every country may also be instanced.) The fact, then, that there is no written record of any piece of literature is no proof at all that it did not exist in a most lively manner in the hearts and minds of thousands. If I were to take up one of your arithmetic exercise-books I might hunt in vain for the multiplication table. You would smile at the idea. Of course you would say, "We *know* that, and are continually using it in our mental work; it would be ridiculous to carry about a copy of the multiplication table." In just the same way you will find that the Apostles, in writing letters to the various Churches, assume that the Christians already know the groundwork of their faith. (Read aloud Heb. vi., opening verses. The following may also be read or referred to: Jude 3; 2 Tim. i. 13; Rom. vi. 17, xvi. 17; Heb. x. 23; 1 Tim. iii. 16; 1 Cor. viii. 6.)

An additional reason for not committing the Creed to writing was the fear of its falling into the hands of the heathen and being treated irreverently. Even the catechumens were not allowed to have the actual words of the Creed until a few days before their baptism.

III. Early Creed Older than the New Testament.—It must never be forgotten that the Church of Christ was not founded on any written document, and that it flourished for a great many years without any sacred writings of its own. The Epistles were written to people who were supposed to know the great doctrines—that is, the Creed. The Gospels were written to give Christians additional information about Christ, not to give intro-

MAP OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE AT THE TIME OF OUR LORD, SHOWING THE "PROVINCES" INTO WHICH THE EMPIRE WAS DIVIDED.

B. to H. C.

To face p. 83.

ductory teaching. (Read once more the preface to St. Luke.) The Church and its teaching—that is, the Creed—are older than the books of the New Testament. If we had never had any New Testament, or if it were possible for us to lose it, it would make no difference to the existence of the Church. The Church's one foundation is not a book, but Jesus Christ her Lord.

IV. Early Forms of the Creed Varied Slightly.—In the earliest days of Christianity the Creed that converts were required to recite was very short, perhaps only at first an acknowledgment that Jesus is the Son of God (Acts viii. 37) or the form of words given in St. Matt. xxviii. 19. The additions would naturally come gradually, and the wording and arrangement of the doctrines seem to have varied in the different Churches that were established at such great distances apart; but all agreed in the main articles of what we call the Apostles' Creed.

V. How Difficulties Arose.—We saw in our last lesson that the Apostles' Creed states truths which, though they are expressed in simple words, are in their fulness beyond our understanding. The early converts to Christianity were, so to speak, close to Our Lord in His earthly life. Some had actually seen and heard Him; others had seen and heard His immediate disciples. They accepted Christ as their God and Saviour in faith and joy. But as the years went on it was inevitable that the question should arise, "How can these things be?" and with the question came the need for definite statement. Men began to wonder, to question, and to try to explain. Teachers arose who led their followers away from the Apostles' teaching, and taught wrong views or "heresies," as they were called, and so introduced strife and confusion into the Church.

VI. The Council of Nicæa (A.D. 325) and the Nicene Creed.—The disputes and controversies led to such excitement and became so unseemly that it was decided to hold a great meeting of the Christian Bishops, in order that the Creed of the Church should be declared. This was in the time of Constantine, the first Christian Emperor of Rome. (The teacher should make on the

board, or show, a rough map of the Roman Empire, marking the position of Nicæa in Asia Minor.) The place arranged for the meeting was Nicæa, and you can see what great distances many of the Bishops had to travel, some of them no doubt having to walk the greater part of the way. About three hundred Bishops were present, besides other elders and attendants. In the discussions at this famous meeting two names stand out beyond the others, curiously enough neither of them Bishops. *Arius*, a priest of Alexandria, was allowed to express his opinions. He had been the chief one to spread the heresy that Christ was not truly God. His great opponent was *Athanasius*, a deacon only at the time, but who afterwards became Bishop of Alexandria and spent all his life and energy in maintaining the truth of Christ's divinity. The great majority of the meeting supported Athanasius; they knew that the Godhead of Christ was the very centre of their faith, and we can feel how intense the enthusiasm must have been when the grand clauses of the Creed were agreed upon. (Let the class turn to the Nicene Creed and notice the additions after the title "Jesus Christ.") It should be observed that these clauses give us a fuller setting-forth of the real nature of Our Lord. They are great statements intended to warn off the faithful from recognised errors.

The Nicene Creed, then, was the first to which the whole Church agreed, and it was solemnly sanctioned again and again by later Church Councils. These struggles for maintaining the whole truth were as important, in their way, as the struggles of the Early Christians to uphold the faith in the face of persecution. So that there have been many battles round the Creed, battles with the heathen and battles within the Church, and battles are still raging round it, and no doubt will do so in the future. Our great flag has waved always triumphant through all, and it is now entrusted to us—not only to Bishops and priests, but to each one of us.

VII. The Athanasian Creed is called after this same Athanasius, because it upholds the doctrine of the Trinity so associated with him as its champion. But it

was probably not written by him, and did not appear till long after his time. (Let the class turn to the Rubric before the Athanasian Creed, and notice how it is arranged to be sung about once a month during the year.) It is more in the nature of a hymn than a creed. It does not begin with the words "I believe." Although we speak sometimes of the "three Creeds" in the Prayer-book, this is not a really correct way of speaking. There is only one Creed, or belief, or faith.

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Write out the clause of the Litany in which we pray to be delivered from heresy.
2. Write a short account of the first great Church Council, and say why you think it was important.
3. Write down the Nicene Creed; underline in coloured chalk the parts *not* found in the Apostles' Creed.
4. Make a sketch-map to show where Nicæa was. Write the date 325 by the side of the town.
5. Say all you can about Athanasius.

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—History of the Creeds in Proctor's "History of the Prayer-book," or in Blunt's "Annotated Book of Common Prayer"; "Builders of the Church and Prayer-Book" (Lesson XI.), Rowton.

LESSON XV

The Chief "Article" of our Belief

Introduction.—We are now going to study the different "Articles," or separate points of our belief, more in detail. To-day we will think about the first clause: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth."

I. I Believe.—The first word is important. Why is it not "we" believe? In a matter of belief, every one must answer for himself. Draw from the class that belief is an inward, personal thing. No one can answer for the belief of another. No one really *knows* what another believes, unless that other chooses to impart it. No one can *make* another believe anything. What great mistakes have arisen from the idea that one man can force a belief on another? Some of the Early Christians were tortured into *saying* things they did not believe, but it did not affect their real inward opinion. Papists and Protestants in the sixteenth century may also be instanced.

II. God.—The knowledge that we enjoy about God to-day did not come to mankind all at once. Man's conception of God, feeble as it must always be, has had a very gradual growth. God has revealed Himself step by step as Man has been able to receive the knowledge. The world has been, so to speak, God's great school, and some races of mankind have been more apt scholars in that school than others. The Hebrew race in particular stands out beyond all other races in the ancient world for its knowledge of God. But even so, the early history of the Hebrews shows us that they did not at first grasp the truth that there was but one God. They considered Jehovah as the greatest among the gods of the

nations and the One True God for Israel. But it was only gradually that they came to see that the gods of the heathen were but idols. However, their idea of One God of Israel was a great advance on the many gods of other nations. (Let the class contribute anything they know about the gods of the Romans, Greeks, Egyptians, Scandinavians, &c.) It is curious to notice that the ancient Greeks, who are famous even now in matters of thought and intellect, had but very imperfect ideas about God. They worshipped a multitude of gods, and they held that even Zeus, the chief of their gods, could not contend against a mysterious force that they called "Fate." This was doubtless a *feeling* after the one true God. Some of their greatest thinkers also had an idea of God as a Father, but not in the Christian sense (see Acts xvii. 28).

Even to-day there are races who have no better idea of God than our own savage forefathers had. They think of God, so far as they think of Him at all, as an angry tyrant rather than a loving Father. They see Him in the great forces of Nature like the storm, the flood, and the earthquake. But this sort of natural religion does not take them far. Let us turn now to see what *revelation* tells us, or, in other words, God's own answer to man's persistent prayer, "Tell me, I pray Thee, Thy name" (Gen. xxxii. 29).

III. God the Father.—When, as Christians, we say that God is our Father we mean a very great deal; so much, indeed, that all the rest of the Creed flows from it, as I shall try to show you as we go on with the study of it.

Although in Old Testament times, and among heathen nations, the idea that God is our Father was dimly perceived by some prophets and poets (Isa. ix. 6; Ps. lxviii. 5; Jer. xxxi. 3, 9; Mal. i. 6, ii. 10; Acts xvii. 28; have these passages marked ready to read to the class), it was Christ Who *revealed* the great truth to us that He is a loving Father, and brought it home to us in countless ways.

If, then, we are taught to call God our Father, we

may ascribe to Him all the best that we can think of in an earthly father, and this carried to perfection. A loving father is one to whom we naturally turn for help and protection, and to provide us with the necessities and comforts of life. If we are in trouble, we feel sure that he will always sympathise and take our part and put us right again. If we are puzzled or worried about our work or plans, we go to him for advice. Above all, we know our father *loves* us in the best and truest way. He loves each one of the family as a special person, as an individual, not merely as one among many others. His love is quite *just*; if he does more for one child than another, or gives one greater opportunities than another, it is because that particular child requires it or can use them.

Once more, if he is a really loving father he cannot disregard any wrong-doing. You must, in truth, admit that it would not be a really loving father who did so.

Let the class work out each of these ideas, to see if we can apply them to our Heavenly Father. The following passages may be referred to or quoted as need arises: St. Matt. v. 45, vi. 8, 32; St. Luke xv. 32; Phil. iv. 19; 1 Pet. v. 6, 7; St. Matt. x. 29, 30, 31; St. Luke xii. 47, 48; St. Matt. xxv. 15; Heb. xii. 5-11; 2 Cor. xiii. 14. (Call attention to the fact that in the "Grace" the expression of *love* is associated with God the Father.)

IV. Almighty.—The next word in our Creed takes us a great deal further still. We know that an earthly father has often to say that he cannot do what we ask him; perhaps he cannot afford it, perhaps he has not sufficient knowledge, or sufficient skill. But the power of our Heavenly Father is without any limits at all. He is almighty, and *can* do all that is good for us. Some day, when you are older, you will find this belief a great comfort; there is a great deal of pain and suffering and evil in the world, and when we hear of some terrible accident in which numbers are killed, or of some very sad bereavement in a family, we must always remember that our Heavenly Father, Who is not only Almighty

but All-wise and All-loving, permits it, and that *in the end* it will be best.

V. Maker of Heaven and Earth.—Let the children shut their eyes for a few moments and think of the grandest, the most beautiful, or the most awe-inspiring thing they have ever seen or heard. The results may be such as the following: the stars at night, the sea, with its terrific depth, a sunset, snow-capped mountains, a river winding amongst meadows, a tiger, the wing of a butterfly, a steam-engine, a little child, and so on. (It is far better not to suggest any of these, but to amplify whatever the children give, however simple. The teacher, however, would do well to say what he himself feels to be the grandest thing.) Now let us try to associate this beautiful or awe-inspiring thing with God; when we see or hear it let us say to ourselves, "God made it," or "My Father made it."

VI. Man.—However greatly we may love and admire "Nature," there is one creation of God on earth which stands far above all the rest, that is Man. "What a piece of work is Man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving, how express and admirable! in action, how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god!" That is how Shakespeare speaks of Man ("Hamlet," ii. 2), and when he says "like a god" he reminds us of the first chapter of the Bible: "God created man in his own image." (Let the class refer to Gen. i. 26, 27.)

VII. God's Work Shown in the Work of Man.—In creating Man God gave him the wonderful gift of reason by means of which Man has been able to find out many of the great secrets of Nature, and thus to realise the joy of discovery—one of the great joys which God has evidently intended for Man. Let the class think over some of the greatest men they have ever heard of. It will give the class pleasurable activity if one scholar is allowed to name a man and another say what he did. Thus: Columbus; Michael Angelo, the great painter, sculptor, and architect; Moses; Galileo, who made the telescope; Livingstone; Newton; Shakespeare; Arkwright; St. Paul;

Stephenson; Marconi; Mozart; Edison. The names are purposely mixed as to time, and *kind* of greatness, as this heightens the idea that *all* progress is from God, and encourages the children to contribute names freely as they occur to them.

[*Note.*—The teacher will make this lesson much more effective if he finds out beforehand some of the special interests of the class in their day school work. A very few names that really appeal to them will be more impressive than a long list of names comparatively strange; the names mentioned above are given to suggest variety of fields of action, but a selection only should be mentioned, and not even these if the class produce others of their own.]

Far back in the ages there were others who are forgotten—those who found out fire, those who discovered metals, the makers of wheels, the inventor of the mariner's compass, and so on.

VIII. Progress is a Pleasure and All Work and Study Religious.—Now you know quite well that few things please your earthly father more than for you to do well at school, to show intelligence, to make and discover and plan for yourselves. We may surely believe, then, that our Heavenly Father shows His love in this way too; that He placed Man in surroundings and amongst opportunities where he could find things out for himself and taste the joy of creation in a certain sense; and we can believe, too, that God rejoices at every fresh discovery that Man makes. "The Earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof," and all discoveries of science are in reality the finding out more and more of the works of God. We must never for a moment suppose that it is irreverent to connect our worldly affairs with God. *The greatest irreverence we can offer to God is to shut Him out of our thoughts;* we can never think of Him too often, nor is there any department of our life or work that we can label "not religious." You admire the tremendous power of a steam-engine or an Atlantic liner; if it reminds you of how God has given Man the mind and intelligence and skill to make such things, you have fresh cause to praise and worship God in your heart, and this adds to your religion. Whatever we

study—science, art, literature, other languages—let us get into a habit of thinking of them as a gift from the Maker of all things, visible and invisible.

IX. Thanksgiving.—Let one of the class read aloud (or repeat from memory, if possible) the first part of the General Thanksgiving. Stop the reader at the words "but above all," and say that this brings us to God's greatest gift to Man. We must leave that to consider in our next lesson.

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Psalm ciii. has been called the most beautiful hymn ever written. Read it through, and write down any verses that you can connect with this lesson.
2. Psalm civ. is also illustrative of this lesson; some verses may be chosen by the pupil and learned by heart.
3. Find some parts of Morning Prayer where we praise God as the Creator.
4. Learn Faber's lines beginning "The Love of God is broader than the measure of man's mind."
5. Write out or learn the General Thanksgiving as far as the words "this life."
6. Write out the Grace at the close of Morning Prayer.
7. Learn "Hold Thou my hands," No. 403, "English Hymnal."

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—"Creed of the Christian," Gore, chapter on the Fatherhood of God; George Herbert's "The Pulley," and Blake's "Tiger" (these might be read to an elder class); Ruskin's "Ethics of the Dust," Lecture X., on the gods of the heathen.

LESSON XVI

The Incarnation

Introduction.—Remind the class of what was said in the last lesson—that the whole of our Creed flows naturally from the first Article of it—the belief that God is our Father; or, in other words, that God loves us. We ended the lesson in the middle of the General Thanksgiving. Let one pupil finish the broken sentence " . . . but above all for Thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by Our Lord Jesus Christ." We say " above all " because this is the very heart and centre of our Christianity; and it is " inestimable " because we shall never be able to understand or grasp the measure and value of it.

I. Man's Need for a Picture of God.—We were putting together last time the different ways in which man has struggled to think of God. It was, indeed, a hopeless struggle, expressed finely by Job in the passage beginning " Canst thou by searching find out God? " (Read aloud xi. 7-9.) The human mind cannot think out God. He is a Spirit; all-wise, all-powerful, eternal, everywhere present. We can say these words, but no one can fathom their meaning. God was, as it were, obliged to show us Himself in a way we could understand, in the God-Man, Jesus Christ. (Read aloud 2 Cor. iv. 6.)

From the beginning, God had been, if we may so express it, teaching Man what He was like. Besides the great book of *Nature*, He had called a special *Nation* to be trained to a sense of righteousness, He had inspired special *men* to speak of Him to others. (" He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets since the world began.") But it was not till Christ came that men

understood the love of God, His feeling for our bodily sufferings, as well as His desire to save our souls, and His severity towards everything in the shape of pretence and insincerity and sham. (The teacher should tell in his own words the substance of St. John xiv. 7-9, and read aloud Heb. i. 1-3.)

II. Man's Need of a Saviour.—In some family you know (possibly in your own) there is one boy or girl who is delicate, or perhaps backward, or perhaps disobedient and troublesome. If you observe carefully you will find that the father and mother of that child trouble and think and care more about him than about all the others. Our Lord tells us that God is like an earthly parent in this point too. (The class will be able to quote the parable of the Lost Sheep.)

In the good and glorious universe that God made, in His family as it were, there may be many worlds of people besides ourselves. We do not know. But we are quite certain that in *this* world, something, somewhere, at some time went wrong. Sin soiled God's highest creation, Man. Man has therefore required God's special love, pity, and sympathy. (Read aloud Blake's "Can a mother sit and hear an infant cry, an infant fear?")

III. The Great Confession.—You know that the Jews had been expecting a great deliverer for hundreds of years; but they never even dimly thought how great He would be, that He would be God Himself in human form. Let us see who was the first to grasp the great truth. There is one short incident in Our Lord's earthly life that we ought to know quite thoroughly, as we do the account of His death. He had been preaching to the people, teaching the disciples, and healing the sick, for a long time, travelling, as you know, from village to village in Galilee. He had incurred the hatred of the Pharisees, and was no longer allowed to teach in the synagogues. His work, to the eyes of His chosen disciples, cannot have seemed successful. And now He led them away from their usual surroundings, up far north, to the region bordering on Tyre and Sidon and a town called Cæsarea Philippi, where they were

strangers. One day while they were here, they found Him alone, praying (Luke ix. 18). You remember that He prayed before He *chose* the twelve disciples; now He prays before teaching them the most important truth of all. He began to prepare their minds by asking them a simple and natural question, "What did the multitudes down in Galilee say about Me? Whom do they think I am?" The disciples immediately began one after another to tell Him what they had heard. Some of the people thought He was John the Baptist come to life again; others thought He was Elijah; others Jeremiah, and so on. Then Jesus turned to them with the great question on which so much was to depend: "But Whom say *ye* that I am?" We can imagine the silence and the suspense of the moments that followed, broken at last by the well-known words of Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." These words seem natural and appropriate to us *now*, but we must never forget that they were first spoken by a man to Someone Whom most of His neighbours must have regarded as only a fellow-man of humble birth, *a fellow-man*, not great in the eye of the world, apparently not even successful as a teacher. The importance of Peter's answer is clearly shown by Our Lord's words: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven."

IV. The Church Built on this Truth.—And so you will see that it has been so from the first. The very earliest creed recorded, as required of one desiring to be baptized, was the confession that Jesus is the Son of God (see Acts viii. 37). The other parts were added gradually, but all centring round this. (Ask the class some questions about the Council of Nicæa—why it was called together—what important clauses were added, &c.)

[*Note.*—For a younger class the lesson might end here. Elder pupils, who are familiar with the story of Peter's confession, might go on with the following.]

The grand hymn that we sing every Sunday, called the "Te Deum," is supposed by many people to be

addressed entirely to Jesus, to the Second Person of the Trinity, ascribing to Him all the titles given in the Old Testament to God the Creator. Let the class turn to it in their books. (Verses 11, 12, 13 are supposed to have been added later.) It was doubtless a great song of triumph that the Church had maintained the truth of the Godhead of Christ in the face of so much heresy. (It may be explained that the opening words are not "Te Deus laudamus," we praise Thee, O God, but, "Te Deum laudamus," which means, we praise Thee *as* God; we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord; that is, the Lord of the Old Testament, Jehovah.

V. The Consequences of the Incarnation.—We all know quite well that a person who *does* a good act has much more influence over us than one who merely talks about it. Example is better than precept, we say. Why is it better? It not only shows us that the thing *can* be done, but gives us an object-lesson in the way to do it. The world might well have despaired of ever beholding an entirely good man; evil seemed mixed with everything. But Christ gave us a fresh start, a new life, and a new hope, so that He has been called the second Adam. His standard of goodness was quite new to the world, He was always surprising not only His opponents, but those who knew Him best, and even now we are faltering in His steps so lamely, that a man once said to another who complained that Christianity had failed, "Failed! Why, it has never yet been *tried*."

The redemption of the world, then, is still going on. The Lamb of God taketh (=is taking) away the sins of the world. He has already redeemed us from terror of God and the fear of death, and will have redeemed us soon, we hope, from cruelty, hate, and the power of sin.

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Learn the parable of the Lost Sheep.
2. Learn Blake's lines beginning "Can a mother sit and hear?"

3. Write out the "comfortable words" from the Communion Service.

4. Say in your own words why Christ has been called "the second Adam," or write out 1 Cor. xv. 20-22.

5. Learn "Praise to the Holiest in the height" (172, A. and M.).

6. Read St. Matt. xvi. 13-20.

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—Works on the Incarnation are very numerous. We cannot give anything like a complete list here; but the teacher may profitably study the articles in "Lux Mundi" and Bishop Gore's "Creed of a Christian."

Refer all the titles given to Our Lord in the "Te Deum" to Old Testament passages (*e.g.* The Father Everlasting; Isa. ix. 6). This might be given as an exercise to an elder pupil.

LESSON XVII

Jesus Christ

Introduction.—We have seen that the great foundation of our religion is the love of God, and last time we saw that His love for us led to the Incarnation. The eternal Son of God took flesh and dwelt amongst us. In the next sentence of the Creed we declare our belief that *Jesus of Nazareth* is that eternal Son of God. Repeat "And in Jesus . . . Mary." The sentences that follow declare what He *did* rather than what He is. To-day we will think of what He is in His nature and person.

I. God and Man.—The few words we have just repeated sum up what we know of the being and nature of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. The longer phrases of the Nicene and the Athanasian Creeds are only intended to make it clearer and more emphatic. (Let the class turn to these and read in the Nicene: "And in one Lord . . . was made Man"; and in the Athanasian: "For the right Faith is . . . God and Man is one Christ.") The fact which stands out clearly in all is that Christ is true God and true Man. It is the *perfectness* of both that we must try to bear in mind.

II. Jesus.—The first title given Him is the purely human name. (Get the meaning from the class by referring to Lesson VI.) In using this name in the Creed we state our belief that Jesus, Who lived as man at a definite time and place on this earth, is the Son of God.

III. Christ.—This word is not a name but a title. It is the Greek word answering to the Jewish "Messiah."

(Let the class tell why a Greek word was used when the Gospel spread beyond the Holy Land.) One of the most striking facts in the history of the Jews is their intense belief in the coming of a great deliverer. (See Gen. iii. 15, xii. 3, xlix, 10; Num. xxiv. 17-19; Deut. xviii. 18; 2 Sam. vii. 13; Psalms ii., xl., cx., and others; Micah v. 2; Mal. iii. 1, iv. 5, 6.) "Messiah" means "anointed." Among the Jews there were three types of people anointed—kings, priests, and great teachers (or prophets). Although the nation as a whole expected their Messiah to be a king, some looked rather for a great teacher. This was specially the case with the Samaritans. The woman of Samaria who spoke to Jesus at the well, said: "I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ; when He is come He will *tell* us all things" (St. John iv. 25). But the early disciples were fully persuaded that Jesus would found an earthly kingdom, even up to the time of His Ascension (Acts i. 6). It seems likely that it was only after the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost that they all fully realised how great and widespread His kingdom was to be, and that their long-expected Messiah was none other than God Himself.

IV. His Only Son.—We are all the children of God, but Christ is called His only Son because He is the Son of God in an altogether special sense. As the Athanasian Creed says, in speaking of Our Lord, the Son is eternal; that is to say, He has been the Son of God from all eternity. Again, as the Nicene Creed says, He is of one substance with the Father. Jesus never put Himself on the same level as His disciples in this respect; He frequently spoke of God as "My Father," never as "Our Father." Notice particularly His words to St. Mary Magdalene (St. John xx. 17), and to His mother (St. Luke ii. 49). Point out that the "Lord's Prayer" was for the *disciples* to use, and is therefore no exception.

V. Our Lord.—We are so accustomed to speak of Christ as "Our Lord" that we are apt to forget the deep significance of the title, especially so because the

force of the word "Lord" has been greatly weakened in modern English. Let the class turn over the pages of the Old Testament and notice the word printed in capitals; in this case it always stands for God Himself, whose dread name of Jehovah was not to be pronounced in ordinary speech. When we give this title to Jesus in the Creed, therefore, we are declaring Him to be one with God. (Compare the same title given to the Holy Ghost in the Nicene Creed.) Now if we look again at the titles in the Creed we shall see how they go up to a climax. *First*, Jesus, the Man; *second*, Christ, the Man anointed and expected through the ages; *third*, the Son of God; *fourth*, the Lord, Jehovah, God Himself.

[*Note.*—It is quite easy to find and quote numerous passages in the Bible to prove that Our Lord was perfect God. An array of texts of this nature, however, has little interest for children, who are not usually likely to doubt the doctrine.]

VI. How Christ Came.—The next words of the Creed, "Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary," tell us in another way that Christ was God *and* Man. He had no human father; Joseph guarded and protected Him in His childhood, and His mother. Of His mother the Gospels tell us little. (Let the class quote her reply to the angel, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord . . .") Then, much as we may long to know about that wonderful life, thirty years are passed over by the Gospels in almost complete silence. The Child grew, as other children do, in *mind* as well as body (St. Luke ii. 40, 52). Jesus worked as a carpenter (St. Mark vi. 3), and so completely did He take manhood upon Himself that perhaps none but His mother and St. Joseph guessed that He was other than themselves.

VII. Christ's Humanity shown in His Temptation.—At the age of thirty Christ was baptised; the Holy Spirit descended upon Him, and then followed the Temptation. You have often read the account of Our Lord's temptation. Perhaps you have never thought how real it was. *How* He could have been tempted

is a mystery, but we are led to understand that it was a fierce trial, a real temptation. (Read or quote Heb. ii 18, and iv. 15.)

It should be impressed on the class that Christ's temptation in the wilderness was not His only experience of temptation, but that He was tempted continually up to His Death on the Cross. There is nothing that shows His real humanity so clearly or that unites Him so closely with us in sympathy (St. Luke xxii. 28).

VIII. The Creed in the "Te Deum."

[*Note.*—The following paragraphs may be omitted with children near the younger limit of age.]

There is a beautiful phrase in the "Te Deum" which would be still more beautiful if it were correctly translated from the Latin. "When Thou tookest upon Thee to deliver man" ought to be "When Thou tookest manhood upon Thee in order to deliver it." God took the *whole* of manhood upon Him in order to deliver it. He has not only saved our immortal souls, but has sanctified and ennobled all parts of our mortal life. A child on his mother's lap is more sacred to us since Christ lay helpless on the lap of Mary. Working with our hands is no longer thought degrading, since Christ worked with "chisel, saw, and plane." Temptation is no sin, for the Sinless One was tempted. Poverty, persecution, and suffering have all been rendered easier to bear by Christ's example.

IX. Another Early Creed.—You all know that the Early Christians in the days of persecution were obliged to keep from observation, and many secret signs arose amongst them. One way in which a Christian could let others know that he was one of the "faithful" was to make the sign of a fish. The word "fish" was a whole creed in itself. The language commonly used was Greek, and the Greek for fish is "ichthus" (ἰχθύς). *Ch* and *th* are each single letters. (The teacher should write on the board the letters separately thus: *i ch th u s.*) *I* is the same as *J* and stands for "Jesus," *ch* stands for "Christ," *th* stands for

"Theou," which means "of God" (compare the word "theology"); *u* is the first letter of the Greek word for "Son"; *s* is the first letter of the Greek word for

AN "ICHTHUS" LAMP

"Saviour." So that the whole word stood for "Jesus Christ, God's Son, the Saviour." (Show or draw a sketch of an "ichthus" lamp.)

[*Note.*—The letters A and Ω on this lamp are Alpha and Omega, the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet (see Rev. i. 8). The other sign ☧ is *Chr*, the short form for "Christ."]

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Learn the verses of the Athanasian Creed from "The right Faith is" to "God and Man is one Christ."
2. Read the first chapter of Hebrews.
3. Learn the second and third verses of "The Bag," by George Herbert.
4. Write Our Lord's titles in the Creed in a column, with the meaning of each opposite.
5. Why was a fish a symbol of Christianity? Make a drawing of an "ichthus" lamp.

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—Look up any article on the "Messiah" in a Bible dictionary. Sermon by Robertson of Brighton on "The Sympathy of Christ." Read Herbert's "The Bag."

The following quotation from Ruskin is suggestive:

"We never think of Christ enough as God, never enough as Man; the *instinctive* habit of our minds being always to miss of the Divinity, and the *enforced* habit to miss of the humanity. We are afraid to harbour in our own hearts, or to utter in the hearing of others, any thought of Our Lord as hungering, tired, sorrowful, having a human soul, a human will, and affected by events of human life: and yet one-half of the efficiency of His atonement, and the whole of the efficiency of His example, depend on His having been this to the full."

LESSON XVIII

The Cross

Introduction.—Last time we were thinking about the nature and being of Christ. To-day we pass to the next articles of the Creed and think of what He did for us while here on earth.

I. The Works of Christ.—Let the class tell any of the deeds of Jesus as they occur to them—*e.g.* teaching the disciples, preaching to the people, healing the sick, comforting and encouraging those who were repentant, feeding the hungry, raising the dead. In the case of a younger class, definite instances of each should be asked for. St. Peter summed up all these works in one simple sentence: "He went about doing good" (Acts x. 38).

Of all these wonderful works, if one were picked out you would perhaps be unable to say at once in which of the four Gospels it is related. But there is one part of Our Lord's life which is told us by *all* the Evangelists. This is the last few days and the events that led directly to His death. Now, turning to the Creed, we see that it proceeds at once from Christ's birth to His death, making no mention of His teaching and works of healing. Thus the Creed and the Gospels alike give great prominence to Christ's death. The Creed is intended to be a *short* statement of the most important truths.

II. His Death for us Men.—Christ's daily work on earth, when He "went about doing good," was for all mankind only in an indirect way; it was immediately for those around Him, and for us only as an example. But His becoming man and His death were for us all in a very direct and special way. Turn to the Nicene Creed and notice the words "Who for us men and for

our salvation came down from heaven"; and the words "also for us" after the word "crucified." The great fact is that Christ died for the sins of the whole world. When you come to the Holy Communion you will see how this fact is the very centre of the service. (Let the class turn to the Prayer of Consecration and read *to themselves* as far as the words "coming again.")

III. How His Death Differed from that of other Men.—The death of Christ was not only the death that all men die. It was something far beyond what we can understand. Every year as Holy Week comes round we go over the terrible scenes that led up to the Cross—the treachery of Judas, the "exceeding sorrow" in Gethsemane, the trials, the mockery, and the scourging. It is, no doubt, right for us to know all the details of it as well as we can, and we can never know them sufficiently well, but we must never suppose that Christ's *bodily* sufferings were the most important. Although Christ's bodily sufferings contained every element of disgrace and torture, yet it was the suffering of His soul that outweighed all else. A poet has tried to express it by saying that the sins of the world came between God and His Son:

> And Adam's sins have swept between the righteous Son and Father;
> Yea, once, Immanuel's orphaned cry His universe hath shaken—
> It went up single, echoless,—"My God, I am forsaken!"
> It went up from the Holy's lips, amid His lost creation,
> That of the lost, no son should use those words of desolation!"
>
> (E. B. Browning.)

IV. The Cross the Chief Symbol of Our Faith.—The Apostles and other earliest teachers of Christianity preached this great truth continually. Repentance and faith were required of all converts, and the centre of the faith was that Jesus, the Son of God, Who died on the Cross, was their *Saviour*. (Revise the meaning of the fish as a symbol.) It was, as all well know, the *Cross* that became the chief symbol of Christianity. As far as can be judged from early records, the crucifix and other representations of Our Lord's physical sufferings were not usual in early days. The simple cross is used as a sign, and in

one case (in the catacombs) there is a figure of Christ *standing by the side of His cross* as though triumphant. And thus the cross reminds us not only of the death of Christ but of His glorious Resurrection.

V. Why Christ's Sufferings were Necessary.—We have seen that Christ died for our sins and for the sins of the whole world. We are here face to face with a mystery that we cannot understand, but which we believe and "show forth" every time the Holy Communion is celebrated.

We can see, however, another sense in which His death was necessary. The actual sin of the people around Him caused His death. He foresaw it Himself and told His disciples of it a long time before it happened. That He could have prevented it by His power as God there is no doubt; but we notice how completely He laid aside all but His human power to meet the last days (St. Luke xxii. 53).

VI. The Sins that Caused Christ's Death.—Let the class name the persons or classes of people who brought about the crucifixion: the Pharisees, priests, and elders, whose sin of *envy* had pursued and harassed Christ's work from almost the first; Judas' sin of *greed* and treachery; Pilate's sin of *injustice* in condemning a prisoner whom he knew to be innocent; the sin of the multitude in shouting with the strongest side.

If a good man is placed amongst people who are not good he is bound to suffer. You will understand this when you are older. But it will interest you even now to know that the greatest of all the Greek philosophers, Plato, wrote about this very fact hundreds of years before Christ came. He is discussing the sort of life an entirely just man would lead in this world, and these are some of his exact words (translated, of course, from the Greek): "Without being guilty of one unjust act, let him have the worst reputation so that his virtue may be thoroughly tested and shown to be proof against infamy and all its consequences; and let him go on to the day of his death steadfast in his justice. . . . In such a situation the just man will be scourged, racked,

fettered, and at last, after suffering every kind of torture, will be crucified."

[*Note.*—If the teacher has a copy of the "Republic" this passage would be more striking if taken to the class and read out from the book. It will be found near the beginning of Book II.]

This sounds almost like a description of Christ. (For the evil reputation see St. Matt. xi. 19, xii. 24; St. Luke xi. 15, 54; xiii. 14; xxiii. 2; the substance of which the class can perhaps contribute.)

VII. The Cross for all Christians.—If it is true that Christ was obliged to suffer from the mere fact of His goodness, it follows that every good Christian must suffer too. Christ continually declared this, and warned the multitudes who used to follow Him of the difficulty of being His disciple (see St. Luke xiv. 26, 27; St. Mark viii. 34). Sometimes He checked individuals (St. Luke ix. 58, 62; xviii. 22). As for the Twelve, they were continually being reminded of what was before them (St. Matt. x. 22; St. Mark x. 39; St. John xvi. 33; St. Matt. v. 11, 12). The Apostles preached afterwards in the same strain (Acts xiv. 22). Nowhere and at no time are Christians promised freedom from pain, suffering, and persecution. This did not apply only to the troubles of the Early Church, but is equally true to-day.

VIII. The Attraction of the Cross.—Yet Christ said that if He were crucified He would draw all men to Him (St. John xii. 32, 33). We know how fully these words have been fulfilled. Christ warned of trouble, pain, and sorrow, but He also promised a boundless peace of mind and restfulness, and cheer and *life* (St. John xiv. 27; St. Matt. xi. 28-30, x. 39—these important passages should be read aloud).

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Draw a cross of any design—if possible, the one over your own Holy Table—and write out beneath it St. John xvi. 33, *or* xii. 32, *or* Gal. vi. 14, *or* St. Luke xiv. 27.

2. Print the verse of the "Te Deum" beginning "When Thou hadst overcome . . ."

3. Find any parts of your own church (inside or out) where the cross is represented, and say why you think it is placed there.

4. Look up 1 Cor. i. 23 and say what you think St. Paul means.

5. Read St. Mark xv. 15-39, noticing the extreme simplicity of the account.

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—Read "The Royal Way of the Cross" ("Imitation of Christ").

LESSON XIX

"Under Pontius Pilate"

Introduction.—There is one phrase in the Creed that I want you to think about to-day. The words "under Pontius Pilate" do not at first strike us as being very important. And yet we know that the Creed is a short statement of truths of vital importance, so that no words would be added unnecessarily. Are they to be found in the Nicene Creed? (Let the class look for themselves.)

Pilate's name has thus been handed down from generation to generation as the man who crucified Christ. But the original intention of naming him was not to disgrace him. Pilate was by no means alone responsible for bringing about Christ's death.

I. Pontius Pilate.—The few facts that we know about Pilate, before the account of him in the Gospels, tell us a good deal of his character, and help us to understand his strange behaviour during Our Lord's trial. (Let the teacher here question out from an elder class, or tell a younger class, that Pilate was a governor placed in his position by the Emperor of Rome; that such governors could be rewarded by a better position, or ruined and disgraced for life, by a mere word from the all-powerful Emperor; that governors were answerable to the Emperor for any trouble in their particular province; that the Jews were a particularly difficult nation to rule, ever ready to make riots and rebel against Rome.)

Now there are just two incidents in Pilate's governorship that I want to tell you about. The first occurred as soon as he was appointed. Pilate was a stranger to the Jews, and, little knowing what a horror they had of the use of "graven images" as being an insult to their religion, he allowed his soldiers

to carry the Roman eagles (show picture *) to Jerusalem. The Jews looked upon this as profaning their holy city, and for five days and nights they surrounded his palace at Cæsarea, wildly entreating him to have the eagles removed. On the sixth day he ordered his soldiers out to frighten them away, but without success. Then he *gave way* to their demands. (Discuss with the class or point out the *weakness* of this behaviour.) The other incident is as follows: In his palace at Jerusalem Pilate hung up as an ornament some gilt shields that had been dedicated to the Emperor as to a god. The leading men of Jerusalem considered this as another profanation, and asked Pilate to remove them. When he refused, they wrote to the Emperor himself to complain. Tiberius was sensible enough to see that it was unwise to risk a rebellion over such a trifle, and he ordered Pilate to take the shields to Cæsarea.

So the priests and rulers had found out how Pilate could be managed; a riot of frantic, shouting Jews would *influence* him, and the threat of a letter to the Emperor would *frighten* him. Let us turn now to the trial of Christ, and see how they employed both methods to compel Pilate to commit murder.

[*Note.*—In dealing with a class that knows the details well, the following sections may be briefly questioned out, or set to be worked out in private. With a younger class it would be better to make this the chief part of the lesson and omit the later paragraphs.]

II. How Pilate Tried Christ.—When Christ was before the high-priest, the great object of His judges was to bring evidence against Him and to condemn Him. But the desire of the *Roman* judge was to do justice and release his prisoner. Perhaps you have never noticed how many times and in what different ways Pilate tried to *save* Christ. Ask the class to recall any incidents of the trial that they can remember. Picture the early morning scene, between six and seven, when the "whole multitude" of priests and elders took Christ

* *Pictures and Illustrations for the Teacher,* Series IV., No. 18.

to Pilate's judgment-seat, and denounced Him vaguely as an evil-doer. This was not definite enough for Pilate, and they went on to accuse Him of stirring up tumults, of forbidding people to pay taxes, of making Himself a King. Pilate then took Jesus alone to question Him, and soon found how false the accusations were, and coming forth publicly declared that he found *no fault in Him.* A chance mention of the word "Galilee" suggested to Pilate that he might get rid of his disagreeable duty by sending Jesus to Herod. Herod, however, sent Him back, having found *no fault in Him.* Again Pilate was forced to decide; and he hoped to satisfy his own conscience and also the priests and elders, who were getting more impatient and insistent every moment. Listen to his sentence: "I have examined this Man and have found *no fault* in Him touching those things whereof ye accuse Him. No, nor yet Herod. I will therefore *chastise* Him and release Him." (Discuss with the class the morality of this proposal.)

But this sentence, intended to satisfy every one, was greeted with howls of disappointment and rage. Then Pilate tried another plan. He hoped that the people as a whole would not follow the priests in their envy and hate, and he suggested that he should release Jesus to them, according to the custom of releasing one prisoner at the feast. But the people had been so worked upon by the priests that they were easily persuaded to cry out that they would rather have Barabbas. Pilate began to speak again in favour of Jesus (St. Luke xxiii. 20), but was drowned by a new and dreadful cry: "Crucify!" The word shocked even this hardened Roman judge—so terrible, so disgraceful was the cross—and he exclaimed, "Why, what evil hath He done?" It was a fatal mistake to begin to argue with an enraged mob; but to quell the noise and disperse the crowd by an order to his soldiers might lead to a more serious disturbance. Was one man's life worth it? Pilate *gave way* so far as to order Jesus to be scourged. It was perhaps at this point that the message came from his

wife. (Let the class relate the incident.) Either this message or the sight of Jesus wearing the crown of thorns moved Pilate to appeal once more to the better feelings of the people. He showed Jesus to them with the words, "Behold the Man!"—meaning that surely this was punishment enough. Again the insistent shouts of "Crucify!" Pilate feels he *cannot* do it, and angrily tells them to do it themselves. This the Jews had no power to do, and burst forth with a final accusation against Jesus—that He made Himself the Son of God. (Read or tell very carefully the next private interview between the powerful Roman judge and the Prisoner, nearly fainting from the scourging—St. John xix. 8-11.) Yet once more Pilate makes a serious attempt to save Christ from the cross. "Behold your King!" said he to the people. "Shall I crucify your King?" Now the Jewish leaders determine to try their other method with Pilate, since the clamour of the mob might not prevail. They remind him that they can write to Cæsar: "If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend; whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar. We have no king but Cæsar." Then Pilate delivered Him to be crucified.

The class will be interested to recall the few other matters we hear of Pilate—how he washed his hands before the people, thus showing his sense of the injustice of the act which he was nevertheless allowing. His curt answer to the priests, who wished the wording altered, contrasts strongly with his prompt permission to Joseph of Arimathæa to take away the body of Jesus (St. John xix. 21, 38). His every word and act show a sympathy with the mysterious Prisoner Whom nevertheless he allowed to be put to death.

III. The Date.—We cannot read this account without being quite sure that the Christians would not name Pilate in the Creed in order to denounce him. The mention of his name is no more than a date. It was the usual way of dating among the Romans—to name the person who was governing at the time. It seems to us a little vague, if a king reigned a long time, to

date an event as happening, say, under George III. But in Rome they used to have their governors, or "consuls," elected every year, so that the names of the consuls were as definite as the number of the year. The custom continued when the Emperors were in power and other governors under them. Look at the way in which the preaching of St. John the Baptist is dated in St. Luke iii. 1, 2. The Roman historian, Tacitus, records the Crucifixion in this way: "Christus was executed by Pontius Pilate when Tiberius was Emperor" ("Annals," xv. 44). Here we see the same method of dating. Now Pontius Pilate was governor from the year A.D. 26 to 36, and from other records the date of the Crucifixion is concluded to be the year A.D. 29. So that the words of the Creed are equivalent to "suffered in the year 29."

IV. Why the Date is Given.—Still, we have to ask why the date should be important enough to mention in our short Creed. It is to remind us that our religion rests on definite events that took place in the ordinary course of the history of the world. There is nothing vague or obscure in these events; they were not even confined to the history of the Jewish nation, but took their place in the history of the Roman Empire, for it was a Roman judge who condemned Christ, and it was by a Roman mode of death that He died.

V. Why did Christ come at this Particular Time?—Of course, we cannot give a full answer to such a question. But we can see one or two reasons why St. Paul calls the occasion of Christ's coming the "fulness of time." Read aloud Gal. iv. 4.

State of Religion in the World—(a) Jews.—At this time the whole world was in a very low state of religious belief. Think of the Jews first, of whom we know most. Let the class give their ideas of Jewish religion when Our Lord came; they can say how the Pharisees had become formal, exact about trifles, and forgetful of mercy and love (St. Matt. xxiii.); they can say how the Sadducees disbelieved (Acts xxiii. 8); the high-priests and elders who led the nation were themselves cruel and low-minded (St. Matt. xxvii. 41-43).

(*b*) *The Romans.*—Ask the class to say what they know of the old Roman religion, such as the names of the gods—Jupiter, Neptune, Vulcan; how Nature was worshipped under these various names; how the early Romans were devout worshippers of these gods; but now, at the time we are speaking of, many of their descendants had come to disbelieve in the existence of these gods altogether. The Romans had conquered country after country till all the known world belonged to them. It was difficult to hold together such a variety of nations, and in order to make them feel that they were members of one grand empire, every one was required to worship the Emperor as divine. It is difficult to imagine such a thing, but in the days of the Early Church there were altars erected to the Emperor in the various towns far and wide, and incense offered upon them (show "Pictures and Illustrations for the Teacher," Series IV., No. 19.)

(*c*) *Greeks.*—The more thoughtful and learned people in the empire, of whom the Greeks were the most famous, had sought a higher path. From sheer reasoning they concluded that there must be one God, that the soul was immortal, and that the highest life was one of unselfishness. One is surprised to find ideas that seem entirely Christian among these heathen writers.

[*Note.*—This point is worth dwelling upon, because such a discovery might disturb a young reader's faith, unless he has already grasped the fact in its true relation to Christianity.]

But it is one thing to reason about justice and unselfishness, quite another to *be* perfectly just and unselfish, to *live* the perfect life. It is one thing to reason out high truths, quite another to "preach the Gospel to the poor." The great mass of the poor and the ignorant would never have been helped by Greek philosophy.

(*d*) *Favourable Conditions.*—Not only was the *need* for Christianity greater than ever before, but it was the "fulness of time" in another sense. The world was in the very best condition for the *spreading* of the Gospel. (Get from the class, if possible, some favourable conditions by suggesting the opposite.) If people's

minds are almost entirely given up to war or preserving their lives from an invader, they are not at leisure for any other thoughts. At the time of Christ's birth there was *peace* throughout the empire after wars had been raging for centuries. When missionaries have to deal with strange languages it greatly adds to their difficulties. In the days of early Christianity *one language*—Greek—was understood throughout the empire. (Good government, good roads, regular services of ships from port to port can be mentioned.) This combination of favourable conditions did not last very long and has never recurred in the history of the world.

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Read the account in the Gospels of Christ's trial by Pilate.

2. Write a short account of Pilate.

3. Why was the *time* of Christ's coming specially adapted (1) to the needs of the world, (2) to the spread of Christianity?

4. What does A.D. 1913 mean? Could you write the date in any other way? [By naming King, Prime Minister, Archbishop, &c., in the style of St. Luke iii. 1.]

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—Make a very careful study of the trial by Pilate, first in the Gospels, and then in any life of Christ available, making a list of his various attempts to save Christ. Such a list might be shown to the class.

LESSON XX

The Resurrection

Introduction.—Revise the main points of last lesson. Why is Pontius Pilate named in the Creed? Why is the date important? The foundation of Christianity on events that occurred in the world's history is still more important when we come to speak of the *Resurrection*. Christ's death and burial are historical events, and His Resurrection also happened in the full daylight of history. Hundreds of witnesses gave their testimony to it (1 Cor. xv. 6), and in the eyes of Christians it is the central fact in the story of the world, as well as the keystone of their Faith. From earliest times men had dimly hoped for life after death, some more fully and clearly than others (as we shall consider in a later lesson), but the Resurrection of Christ dispelled all the clouds and doubts and terrors that had gathered round death, and brought life and immortality to *light* (2 Tim. i. 10).

I. The Unexpectedness of God's Dealings with Men.—If we thought out for ourselves the way in which God would be likely to visit the world and reveal Himself to us, we should certainly never have imagined a life and death like that of Jesus of Nazareth. (Work out the following points by questions.) His mother was an unknown village maiden, not a princess; He was born in a stable, not a palace; a working man, not a king; despised and rejected, not adored at once by all leaders of the people; His supernatural power was used sparingly and reluctantly, instead of being used as a "sign from heaven"; His death was in disgrace, hanging between two thieves. No; it was not what any of us would have expected. That such a man should claim

to be the Son of God enraged His enemies; while His words and actions disturbed and troubled His friends. (The teacher should know the following passages so as to refer to them in his own words: St. Luke iv. 28; St. Mark viii. 32, iii. 21; St. John vi. 66, vii. 3-5.)

II. The Resurrection.—And now we come to the Lord's triumph. He rose again on the third day. Death had been conquered. Surely now we may expect that all, friends and enemies alike, will acknowledge the Son of God. But again we find that God's thoughts are not our thoughts, nor His ways our ways.

Did you ever think how little detail of the actual Resurrection the Gospels give? No one witnessed the tremendous happening itself. No pictures can show us how Our Lord rose, and the best sacred pictures dealing with the Resurrection are symbols of this greatest of events rather than representations of it. The great religious painters who have tried to show us the Risen Lord have not so much attempted to teach us how the Resurrection happened as to express the awfulness and wonder of the great triumph over death of Him who was at once God and Man.

III. Christ Appeared only to Believers.—There is another thing to notice that is surprising about the appearances of Christ. They were all to His disciples only; no unbeliever saw Him (with one notable exception). The class may be asked to name the various appearances and see the fact for themselves. Have they noticed it before? Have they considered why it should be? Of course, we cannot imagine what effect an appearance of Christ to all in Jerusalem would have had. It might have been that it would but have hardened His determined enemies. Our Lord had said of such people, "Neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead" (St. Luke xvi. 31). On the other hand, men might have been compelled to believe by such an appearance; and it is plainly evident that God compels none of us; we must believe of our own free will.

IV. Evidence of the Resurrection.—But we must not suppose that this fact makes the evidence of the

Resurrection any less strong. Quite the contrary. People sometimes say, quite falsely, that "love is blind," and sees what it wishes to see; that the disciples expected to see Jesus, and therefore imagined that they saw Him. Nothing can be more unlike the real state of affairs. The women are preparing spices to *preserve* His body for a long time; Mary is *distressed* at the empty tomb, thinking the body must be stolen or removed; the two going to Emmaus are speaking as though *all were over*; Thomas *refuses* to believe; fear and amazement are the feelings that we read about in the Gospels. All these are quite inconsistent with mere imagination. No, love is not blind; love insists on being quite sure, and then, and not till then, rising to the height of joy, exclaims, like St. Thomas, "My Lord and my God."

V. The Resurrection Preached by the Apostles.—The disciples, and especially the Twelve Apostles, felt that their chief duty was to be witnesses of the Resurrection. But were they twelve now? It was in order to make up the number of witnesses that they chose a new Apostle in the place of Judas. Who was this? (Acts i. 21-26.) Who was the one unbeliever to whom Christ appeared? (Acts ix.) St. Paul, in one of his letters, makes a list of Christ's appearances (read aloud 1 Cor. xv. 3-10).

If we look at the accounts of the earliest speeches made by the Apostles, we see how the Resurrection is put first as the greatest of all events, the tremendous fact they have witnessed and which they must proclaim to all the world. (The following references can be given to be looked up for home-work. Elder pupils can find them for themselves: Acts ii. 24, 32; iii. 15, 26; iv. 10, 20, 33; v. 30; x. 40, 41; xiii. 30-37; xvii. 3, 18, 31; xxiii. 6; xxv. 19; xxvi. 23.)

VI. The Resurrection Celebrated by the Church.—And ever since these earliest days the Resurrection of Christ has been the glory of Christianity: the Cross and the empty tomb seem to stand side by side in our thoughts as of equal importance. (If the class are likely to know anything of the Crusades they can be reminded how each soldier wore a cross on his breast, and that

the rallying cry was always "Rescue the Holy Sepulchre!") Notice how Christ's Death and His Resurrection are continually put before us by the Church. Where do we see the Cross? The class will be able to say, probably, "Outside the church," "On the altar or Communion table," "On the lectern," "On the litany faldstool," "Embroidered in the book-marks," "Stamped on the cover of our Prayer books," &c.

How does the Church remind us of the Resurrection? The greatest festival of the year has always been Easter; we begin to prepare our thoughts for it seventy days beforehand. (Let the class look up Septuagesima in their Prayer-book.) We keep the great Forty Days after Easter. On Easter Day itself *everyone* is expected to receive the Holy Communion, so that the whole Church may join in one great thanksgiving. (See rubric at end of Communion Service.) More than this, we set apart one whole day *every week* to celebrate the Resurrection. Every Sunday is a little Easter. So our whole public worship centres round it.

Quote the following lines from Keble's "Christian Year":—

O Day of days! shall hearts set free
No "minstrel rapture" find for thee?
Thou art the Sun of other days,
They shine by giving back thy rays:

Enthronèd in thy sovereign sphere
Thou shedd'st thy light on all the year:
Sundays by thee more glorious break,
An Easter Day in every week:

And week-days, following in their train,
The fulness of thy blessing gain,
Till all, both resting and employ,
Be one Lord's day of holy joy.

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK.

1. Which of Our Lord's appearances after the Resurrection is pictured most clearly in your mind?

Describe it in your own words. Read the account in the Bible carefully first.

2. Learn the first four verses of Hymn 404 (A. & M.).

Or,

3. Learn the following verses of "Hail! Festal Day":

Hail! Festal Day! to endless ages known,
When Christ, o'er death victorious, gain'd His Throne,
Hail, &c.

He reigns supreme, Who died the death of shame;
And all created things adore His Name.
Hail, &c.

Fulfil Thy promise, King of Love, we pray!
The third morn brightens; rise, and come away.
Hail, &c.

No mould'ring tomb shall hold Thee in repose;
No stone the Ransom of the world enclose.
Hail, &c.

Who holdest all things in Thy hallow'd Hand,
No rocky barrier can before Thee stand.
Hail, &c.

Cast off the grave clothes; let them there remain;
Come forth to us, our All, our only gain.
Hail, &c.

Creator, Fount of Life, Thou know'st the grave;
And thence returning, Thou art strong to save.
Hail, &c.

4. Read the Proper Preface for Easter Day in the Communion Service.

5. Write out Rev. i. 17, 18, from "Fear not" to "death."

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—Read Ruskin's description of the miraculous draught of fishes ("Frondes Agrestes," 77).

Read again in the Gospels the various accounts of Christ's appearances. Be able to describe one fully.

Westcott, "Gospel of the Resurrection."

LESSON XXI

The Ascension

Introduction.—Our subject to-day is the Ascension of Christ. It is always closely connected with the Resurrection. Let the class quote the phrase from the Litany, "By Thy glorious Resurrection and Ascension."

I. The Place and Manner of the Ascension.—The same quietness and simplicity mark the Ascension as the Resurrection. The Apostles were gathered together for Our Lord's parting instructions, very probably in that same upper room where they had eaten the Last Supper together. Then He led them out of the crowded and noisy Jerusalem, along the familiar road where they had so often walked together before, past the olive-trees of Gethsemane, over the brook Kidron, and up the slopes of Olivet towards the village of Bethany. (Remind the class of how Bethany had been his favourite place of retirement during the week before His death, and was the home of Martha and Mary.) The disciples were aware that an important moment had come. They thought that perhaps *now* Christ would show His glory to all the world. (Let the class turn to Acts i. 6, and observe the question. Notice carefully the Lord's answer: the *time* is hidden from us all; Christ's purpose in coming to the world was not to satisfy curiosity; and His kingdom is not for Israel or any one nation, but to be extended to the uttermost part of the earth.)

"And a cloud received Him out of their sight." They longed to know where their Master had gone. We long to know. But again curiosity is checked. Just as the women had been told not to stare down into the tomb, among the dead, for Christ, so the disciples are

now told not to stand gazing up into the sky after Him. *Where* "Heaven" to which He has gone is situated (even if it has what we call "situation" at all) we are not told. It may be that "Heaven lies about us" though we know it not. But we are assured that He will come again in "like manner." And in the meantime we have His own promise, "Lo, I am with you alway" (all the days), "even unto the end of the world."

II. The Ascension Closes the Cycle of the Lord's Earthly Life.—The Ascension is the closing scene of Our Lord's life on earth. Every year the Church celebrates one after another the chief events of that life, from the cradle at Bethlehem to the parting on Olivet. (Let the class give briefly the leading festivals and fasts, and the event that each commemorates.) Why should this be done every year? The teacher may find this a fitting opportunity to point out to the class the *value* of these recurring feasts and fasts. The class should be invited to speak their mind freely on the point. To some children, for instance, it seems unreal or insincere to be sad and grave on Good Friday, when we know that Christ has risen. To others, again, it seems unreal to be sad or joyful merely in a routine order. Many grown-up people have felt the same difficulty, and prefer to follow their own state of mind or mood. This was the case in quite early days, and we are warned not to judge for other people (Rom. xiv. 5). But we feel that the Church is wiser. We are not likely to forget the facts of Our Lord's life, but an event that may be commemorated at *any* time may come at last not to be remembered or thought about sufficiently. We have our favourite portions of the Bible, but if clergymen read their favourite portions as lessons, or Gospels, or Epistles, we might never hear some necessary truths. So the Church ensures that all important events and doctrines shall be put before us in due order. Each of us may have his own private sorrow or joy, but as a great *brotherhood* we all grieve or give thanks together, and it is the duty of each to join as fully and heartily as he can in the common services with his fellow-Churchmen.

[An elder class may be able to appreciate the added power given to public worship when we know that the same feelings are actuating the whole Church throughout the world.]

III. How the Church Celebrates the Ascension: The Vigil.—The day before a feast-day is sometimes called the *eve* (familiar to all in the case of Christmas), sometimes the *vigil*. The word "vigil" means watching. In old times the night before some feast-days was spent in watching and prayer, to remind us that the saint had suffered pain or martyrdom before entering into rest. (St. Luke, who is supposed to have died peacefully, has no vigil.) Later on, this custom was changed—instead of a night watch the whole day before was ordered to be a fast. If we turn to the Table of Fasts at the beginning of the Prayer-book (let the class find this), what do we see appointed before the Feast of the Ascension?

IV. Rogation Days.—Instead of one day's fast, we have three: Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday before Ascension Day, or Holy Thursday, as it is sometimes called. Rogation is a Latin word for "asking." (Compare with the word "interrogation.") Why should these three days be specially appointed for asking or prayer? There are three reasons we can think about:

1. Our Lord specially called upon His disciples to ask for whatever they wanted, because He was leaving them to go to His Father. Look at the Gospel for the Sunday before Ascension Day (often called Rogation Sunday).

2. The time of the year is one when we specially wish to ask God's blessing on the "kindly fruits of the earth."

3. The third reason takes us back about fifteen hundred years. In the fifth century the city of Vienne, in France, was troubled with earthquakes. The people hoped that the Easter festival would bring an end to them. But during the very vigil of the glorious feast-day the palace took fire; the people rushed out of church, and the Bishop was left alone by the altar. He then formed a resolution (which he carried out in the three days before the Ascension festival) of observing a fast and a solemn procession, with prayers and psalms, through the city. These processions, with "litanies"

or "rogations" or "askings" (all words meaning the same thing), became widespread and very popular. When we think of the devastating and cruel wars that went on in those days, and the terrible pestilences that afflicted the people, we can imagine the cheering and encouraging effect such public processions would have. "Rogations or litanies were then the very strength, stay, and comfort of God's Church" (Hooker). The English Church has observed the rogations before Ascension *ever since the coming of St. Augustine.* When outdoor religious processions were put a stop to at the Reformation, an exception was made as regards this particular one, and the custom still lingers in many places under the name of "beating the bounds."

V. Ascension Day.—Holy Thursday itself is regarded by the Church as one of the great feasts, on a level with Christmas, Easter, and Whitsunday. Turn to the beginning of the Prayer-book again, and you will find Proper Lessons and Proper Psalms appointed. Again, in the Communion Service we find a Proper Preface.

VI. Expectation Sunday.—The days between Ascension Day and Whitsunday are sometimes called "expectation days." Let the class tell the reason of this. Why should Our Lord's departure be regarded as a *feast*? We might, perhaps, have expected to find it treated as a fast. But, turning again to the last verses of St. Luke's Gospel, we see that the disciples returned to Jerusalem with great *joy*. They were full of hope and expectation, and spent their days either in the Temple, praising and blessing God (St. Luke xxiv. 53), or in their upper room in prayer and supplication (Acts i. 14).

VII. Christ at the Right Hand of God.—Christ had left them; but He had plainly told them that He was returning to His Father, and that all power was given to Him in heaven and earth (St. John xvi. 28; St. Matt. xxviii. 18). We express this in the Creed by a figure of speech. We believe that Christ is "sitting on the right hand of God"—*i.e.* in the seat of Almighty

Power. The final outcome of His rule must therefore be the victory of Good. This assurance may comfort us when we hear of wars and disasters and strikes and homes destroyed by quarrelling and people being overworked or cheated. (Recent instances should be given in illustration.) Let us just say to ourselves the words we can imagine St. Paul wrote down in triumphant faith and joy: "He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet."

VIII. Christ our Judge.—Invite the class to think a little of the *difficulty* of judging whether a person has acted his best or not; the judge ought to know *all* about him, his education, his health, his chances, and a thousand other things. That is why we are told *not* to judge other people, since we are quite unfit. Lead the class to suggest in what way Christ is able to judge us perfectly—not only from His knowledge as God, but also from His sympathy as Man ("in all points tempted like as we are," Heb. iv. 15).

Let the class learn the following lines:—

Countless voices far and wide
Sing sweet beneath the sky;
All that is beautiful shall abide,
Only the base shall die.

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK.

1. Look at the Proper Psalms appointed for Ascension Day, and write down the verse in each one that is appropriate to the feast.
2. Write or print 1 Cor. xv. 25.
3. Which Sundays are called respectively "Rogation" and "Expectation" Sundays, and why are these names given?
4. Read Acts i. 1-14.
5. Learn either the Collect for Ascension Day or the Proper Preface in the Communion Service.
6. Write out the two verses of the "Te Deum" that correspond to this part of the Creed.

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—Hooker's "Ecclesiastical Polity," Book V., § xli.; "The Way of Worship," Lesson XXV. (Lee); "Frondes Agrestes" (Ruskin), § 26.

LESSON XXII

The Holy Spirit

Introduction.—Let the class open their Prayer-books at the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed, and notice that both are divided into three paragraphs. Question out that these divisions deal with the work of each Person of the Trinity. We have been thinking during the past lessons of our Creation and our Redemption. We have now to think of the work of God the Holy Spirit. It is more difficult to understand, not only for younger people, but for elder ones, no matter how learned, just because our minds cannot imagine a Spirit. We can see the Father's work of Creation; we can picture our Saviour in a thousand ways; it needs a greater effort to understand anything about the third Person of the Trinity. We will make an effort to-day.

I. "The Holy Ghost Eternal" (Athanasian Creed).—We hear so much more of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament than in the Old that we are apt to forget that His work has been going on from the beginning. You all know enough history to be able to think of man in early times, how he was obliged to hunt or search for daily food, and lived perhaps a life little more than animal.

Man has required a very long education, and we can think of the Holy Spirit as continually trying to influence man's spirit and draw him to higher and better things. His work is ever going on, and we can readily see that there are still great heights for man to climb.

II. The Giver of Life.—This title of the Holy Spirit is given in the Nicene Creed. The word "life" includes a great deal. Let the class give suggestions of different kinds of life: the *physical* life, which is the greatest mystery on our planet, no man of science having as yet the faintest idea as to how it began. The words of Genesis, "God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul," are strictly accurate as a general explanation of such a physical mystery, and the greatest philosopher or scientist can give no more definite statement as to the origin of life. If we think of the Holy Spirit as the giver of *spiritual* or religious life, we must not limit our ideas to the Jewish nation. The Greeks, Romans, Egyptians, and others who worshipped the sun, moon, sky, ocean, winds, and other objects in Nature, followed the highest form of worship that they knew, and we may surely believe that when moved by such worship or otherwise to right actions and high ideals such advance was due to the working of the Holy Spirit in their hearts.

An elder class may appreciate these lines of Matthew Arnold:

> Children of Men! the unseen Power, whose eye
> For ever doth accompany mankind
> Hath look'd on no religion scornfully
> That men did ever find.

There is another kind of life that we may regard as the work of God's Spirit. Read aloud Exodus xxxi. 2-5. The class will then be able to see that artistic life and beautiful workmanship are looked upon as inspiration from God. The Greeks, as a nation, were specially inspired with ideals of *beauty*. Read Numbers xi. 16, 17, where the power of orderly government is said to come from God's Spirit. The Romans, as a nation, were specially inspired with ideals of *good government*, law, and order.

III. "Who Spake by the Prophets."—But when we come to read the history of the Hebrews we cannot help

being convinced that the Holy Spirit spoke to them in a way that He spoke to no other nation. We call the Bible an *inspired* book. This word simply means "breathed into," and we feel as we read its grand words that the thoughts were indeed breathed into the writers by some power higher than themselves. As St. Peter says, "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Ask the class to suggest why the Jews were thus selected. Favouritism is, of course, absurd as an explanation, although the Jews themselves fancied this was the case. The fact is simply this: All speaking implies mutual approach of two persons —one to say and one to hear. We know this in ordinary life; you cannot express some thoughts to some people; they cannot "take them in," as we say; Our Lord expressed it by saying that it is useless to offer pearls to swine. Now, some of the great men among the Hebrews were spiritually minded, and ready to be taught by the Holy Spirit. (This does not mean that they were always, in all respects, better or more moral men than others. A good instance to take is the case of Jacob and Esau, brothers brought up among the same influences apparently, and yet Esau was worldly—or, as we may say, animal-minded, and Jacob was spiritually-minded.)

Let the class name some of the great prophets of Israel. Make sure that they understand the word to mean great teachers of spiritual truths, rather than foretellers of the future. As we read again and again the story of the Jews, we see how the Holy Spirit was able to give fuller teaching as time went on. Some of the Psalms, for instance, written after the Captivity, show higher ideals than the ideals of Abraham. At last, the fulness of time came when the world was ripe for the Perfect Man, *filled* with the Holy Spirit. (Read Heb. i. 1, 2; St. Luke iii. 22, iv. 18; St. Mark i. 12.)

I. The Holy Spirit in the Church.—After Christ ascended into Heaven, the Holy Spirit was sent in a special way to His Church, to stay with it *always* (John xiv. 16). So special and so marked was this coming

of the Holy Spirit to man that we look upon the Feast of Pentecost or Whitsunday as the day of all others on which to lay stress on the fact that worship is due to the third Person of the Trinity. But, although the gift was so richly bestowed on the Church, we have to remember that the Holy Spirit still has to *strive* to speak to us, that we are only very slowly becoming more and more able to hear and understand His voice. Our Lord said that He had many things to tell the disciples that they *could not bear then*, and that He must leave for the Holy Spirit to teach them gradually. (St. John xvi. 7-15 should be known almost by heart by the teacher.)

V. The Comforter.—This title of the Holy Spirit we find in St. John's Gospel, and also in the "Te Deum." Question from the class the meaning of the word. It is not the usual meaning, one who consoles us in sorrow; but the *Strengthener*. (Compare it with the words "fort," "fortify," "fortitude.")

Every member of the Church is strengthened for life's struggle by the Gift of the Spirit in his baptism. (See St. Mark i. 8.) Let the class turn to the "Public Baptism of Infants" and notice how often this is mentioned. Again, at his Confirmation he has special gifts of the Holy Spirit to be strengthened for the new difficulties of the widening life. Let the class turn to the Order of Confirmation and notice the Bishop's first prayer; also the actual words of Confirmation, especially the "daily increase," making it quite clear that the Church is always looking forward, expecting more and more light and spiritual strength.

VI. Symbols of the Holy Spirit.—Obtain these from the class by recalling to them the circumstances of the Day of Pentecost. (1) There was a sound as of a rushing mighty *wind*. Why should wind be a symbol of the Holy Spirit? Let the class think of the effects of wind in Nature. It is healthy and "bracing," filling our lungs with fresh air, and nerving us for work and effort. It is purifying; there is nothing like a good strong wind for clearing away disease from a neighbour-

hood. It is invisible and mysterious; "the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth." These are Our Lord's words, and should remind us never to *limit* the action of the Holy Spirit to the Church, or to any age or condition.

(2) Tongues of *fire* appeared on the heads of the Apostles. What does fire suggest to us? Fire, like wind, is purifying, and serves to separate the true metal from the dross. Fire is chiefly used as an emblem of enthusiasm, zeal; we talk of a *burning* desire, and of our feelings *glowing*. The disciples on the way to Emmaus felt their hearts *burn* within them while Christ was speaking. We know what the enthusiasm was like among the first disciples on the Day of Pentecost. We know what it is like in ourselves, and how it will carry us through the greatest difficulties and "remove mountains." Wind and fire both suggest resistless *strength*.

(3) Now, let us think of the third symbol of the Holy Ghost. What appeared at Our Lord's Baptism? Quote again St. Luke iii. 22. It is more difficult to see why the dove should represent the Spirit of God. Here we have the extreme opposite of strength, the very gentlest creature we know. It is almost a shock to us that the Holy Spirit should be thus symbolised. But in reality it has a very deep and almost terrible meaning. It is a truth expressed in various ways, and again and again, that God never forces us; He respects the freedom of our wills. He draws and persuades, chastises and purifies us, but never compels us. It is terribly possible, then, for us to resist Him. St. Paul begs some of his converts not to "quench" the Spirit (1 Thess. v. 19), and others again not to "grieve" Him (Ephes. iv. 30). But this picture has another side. If we can quench the Spirit we can also "stir up the gift of God" (2 Tim. i. 6). Notice that both these expressions are suggested by the thought of fire. And surely, if we can grieve Him, we can also please Him. Every tiny victory for good in every one of us helps forward the eternal work of the Eternal Spirit.

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Learn by heart "Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire" (to be found in the Service of Ordination of Priests).

2. Write out the opening Collect of the Service for Holy Communion.

3. What are the chief symbols of the Holy Spirit? Say why each is used.

4. "Who spake by the Prophets." Write these words and then the names of some people through whom you think the Holy Ghost spoke to the world. (Not necessarily confined to the Bible.)

5. What do you think Our Lord meant by saying, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear"?

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—"The Holy Ghost, the Comforter" (Holden).

LESSON XXIII

The Church Holy and Catholic

Introduction.—The remainder of the third paragraph of the Creed deals with the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church. And our next declaration is our belief in the Church. We must be sure that we are quite clear as to what this word means.

[*Note.*—The minds of the children will be best prepared for this lesson if each writes down, quite shortly, what he considers the Church to be. The variety of answers will form a starting-point for the lesson. Some of the following will probably be given: "All people who believe in Christ," "All baptized people," "The Society that Christ founded," "The company of Christians." If the answers are for the most part *vague*, introduce the lesson as an effort to make our minds clearer. If they are for the most part *correct*, introduce it as an inquiry into the origin and function of the Church, or, in other words, when and how it began, and what was the purpose of it.]

I. The Church Different from any other Society.—The society that Christ founded is unlike any other society or group of people ever formed. We see this best by comparing it with any that we know. The nearest to it, at a first glance, are the groups of disciples that were gathered round the Greek philosophers, such as Socrates, or the Jewish Rabbis, such as Gamaliel. These great teachers laid themselves out to raise the standard of goodness, to give mankind new ideals, to help men to be purer and juster and more unselfish. So, we know, did Christ. In what, then, lies the great difference? These teachers argued and reasoned with their disciples, sought to prove the truths they preached. But Christ spoke "with authority"; He was Master and King; His disciples

were to follow *Him* personally. He did not reason about the perfect life, He lived it. Besides giving His disciples an external living example, He gave them much more, the internal power to follow it. Remind the class that the Holy Spirit was to abide in the Church for ever. Again, most of the great teachers required considerable power of mind in their followers. Over the door of the place where Plato lectured were the words "Let none but geometricians enter here." Compare this with Christ's invitation "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden." All that He requires in men to become His followers is a feeling of *need*, and complete *trust* in His power to help. In other words, repentance and faith.

II. The Means Christ Chose to carry on His Work.—The period of Christ's teaching was very short, three years at the outside; some authorities think it was much less. We can imagine it possible that He might have used other means than He did to accomplish His great purpose. (The class may be able to suggest that Christ might have written down what He wished us to know and do, or caused written records to be made. Impress once again the fact that the disciples had no Epistles or Gospels for a long time. As far as we know, Our Lord Himself never wrote any word for their guidance.) No, His chief work during this short ministry was not healing the sick, or even preaching to the multitude, but training *twelve men*. (Notice that even the Sermon on the Mount is addressed to the disciples.) These twelve men were to be entrusted to carry on the great work. What men were they?

III. How the Church was Founded.—After a night spent in prayer, Christ chose these twelve out of the group of disciples who followed Him, and He called them by a new name. They are more than disciples (*i.e.* learners), they are now Apostles—*i.e.* people sent forth (St. Luke vi. 12, 13.) The *kind* of men chosen is again something of a surprise. They are not learned. Although their slowness of understanding was sometimes difficult to bear (St. Mark viii. 15-21; St. Luke xxii. 24),

there might have been far greater difficulties with learned men. (Let the class make suggestions as to the reason; refer to the parable of the new wine in the old bottles.) Perhaps still more surprising is the fact that they were not peculiarly good or holy men in the eyes of those around or in their own estimation.* They appeared to be just twelve ordinary, hard-working, humble-minded men, who had sufficient faith in Christ to leave everything to follow Him.

IV. What the Church was to do.—The work of these twelve men was to tell the whole world about Christ. To this end He kept them living with Him continually in close intimacy, He taught them specially, He sent them on a practice mission (St. Matt. x.), they were witnesses of His death, Resurrection and Ascension. During the forty days between the Resurrection and Ascension, He accustomed them to be without His visible presence. After the Ascension they kept together as a united body, and as such they elected a new member to take the place of Judas. There were now round them over a hundred others. Then came the great Day of Pentecost, which is sometimes spoken of as the birthday of the Church. On the Day of Pentecost it began its public work; it began to *tell* the world; it was now endued with the spirit of power to *help* the world. By nightfall on that day three thousand were added to its numbers.†

V. The Means Employed for its Work.—In what ways did the Church do its work? If we read the earliest written description of it we see that it began to do *exactly the same things* as it does to-day. Read Acts ii. 41, 42, and ask the class to notice three great points. (1) The Apostles had a *doctrine*; that is, they taught people certain truths about Christ—His life, death, and Resurrection. (2) All the members of the Church kept in close *fellowship*; they considered themselves as *one* undivided body.

* They *might* have been chosen from the Pharisees, among whom were many really good, religious men.

† The work of the Church is not intended to be exhausted in this paragraph. The teacher should suggest that this subject will be taken up again in a later lesson, when the Sacraments are dealt with. Reference may also be made to the work of the Church treated of in Lesson IV.

(3) The Apostles were the means by which all the members received *power* to live the new life—through the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. (Let the class work out for themselves the identity of the Church in the present day with that of Apostolic times, the Creed and the Sacraments being still the basis and inspiration of our religious life.)

VI. Holy and Catholic.—Every word in our Creed is important. Let us look at the words describing the Church.

1. Why is it called "holy"? We have only to look within and around to perceive that all its members are not holy. But the Church as a body aims at holiness, is content with no ideal short of holiness; its Founder was holy; and the Holy Spirit continually inspires it; and it administers the holy sacraments.

2. Why is it called Catholic? "Catholic" is a Greek word for "universal," and that again is a Latin word for "throughout all the world." Where do we find this English form of the word? (Let the class turn to the "Te Deum.") The "Te Deum" names prophets, Apostles, martyrs, as praising Christ, and then we seem to hear the great chorus from the farthest corners of the earth: "the holy Church throughout all the world." Point out to an elder class that this idea of universality did not come easily to the Early Church. It was very hard for a Jew to imagine that all nations could be equally valuable in God's sight. St. Paul seems to have been specially made an Apostle, or "sent" to proclaim this truth. (We first find the word "Catholic" used of the Church in a letter of Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, written about A.D. 100.)

After a time, the word "Catholic" came to include also another meaning. As sects and heresies sprang up, it was used to mean the Church that kept to the doctrine of the Apostles, and taught the *whole* body of Christian truth. Thus St. Cyril of Alexandria (about 400 A.D.) tells his people that if ever they should visit another city it was not sufficient to ask for the Church, as all sorts of heretics professed to be of the Church; but they ought to ask, "Where is the Catholic Church?"

VII. The Word "Church."—If any pupil at the beginning of the lesson has defined the Church as the *place* where we worship, that answer can be taken up now. In one sense it is quite correct, for the word "church" or "kirk" is from a Greek word "kuriakon," meaning the Lord's House.

But this is not the Greek word used in the Bible for Church (*e.g.* Acts ii. 47; ix. 31). Here the word is "ecclesia," which means a body of people *called out* for any purpose. We have it in the word "ecclesiastic," and in the French for church, "église," and Welsh "eglwys." It is a pity that we have no English word that we could use for the body of Christians, and keep the word "church" for the building.

There is one common misuse of the word "church" which we must avoid. A young man is sometimes said to be intending to "enter the Church." There is only one way of entering the Church (by being baptized), and this is not meant. We ought to say that he is intending to take Holy Orders.

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Find some passages in the Sermon on the Mount that show it was addressed to the Church or declared followers rather than to the multitude.
2. Write down the distinguishing marks of the Church.
3. Elder scholars look up, and write down, the first paragraph of Article XIX.
4. What different meanings has the word "Church" in English?
5. Find a clause in the Litany where the word "universal" is used for "catholic."

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—"Some Instruction about the Church of England" (S.P.C.K., 6*d.*).

Think over from your recollection of the Gospels how Our Lord required all His would-be disciples to be decided and definite, and how He rejected the mere following of an admiring multitude.

LESSON XXIV

The Communion of Saints

Introduction.—Our subject to-day is the "Communion of Saints." Let the class compare with the Nicene Creed and notice that the latter does not contain the phrase. It does not appear in any creed before the fifth century, but has been called the "peculiar glory of the Western Creed" (*i.e.* the Apostles' Creed).

I. The Word "Saints" needs a little explanation, since its meaning and use have changed. We think of a saint as a person specially holy and set apart from others (as indeed the word implies). But in the early days of the Church it was used for all the members. Thus, Peter visited the saints at Lydda (Acts ix. 32), and called the saints together at Joppa (verse 41). St. Paul, in his letters, sends messages to all the saints, says that he prays for all the saints, and calls himself the least of all saints. Clearly, it was not a title of distinction *in* the Church, but was used to distinguish the members from those who were outside. It is interesting to notice that the Early Christians had no settled name for themselves for some time. They spoke of themselves as the "disciples," the "saints," "those who call upon the name of Jesus" (Acts ix. 13, 14), "the Way" (Acts xix. 9, 23; xxiv. 22), the "brethren" or "brotherhood" (1 Peter ii. 17; v. 9), a word that we still keep in our Morning and Evening Prayer. (Let the class quote the opening words of the Exhortation.) The Jews called them in derision "Nazarenes" and "Galileans." (Ask the class why these were words of contempt. St. John i. 46; vii. 52.) The word "Christian" itself was given to them by the citizens of Antioch (Acts xi. 26), probably as a term of reproach.

II. Why we are among the Saints.—So when the phrase "Communion of Saints" is used, and we declare our belief in it, we ought to feel that we belong to them, because every member of the Church has been sanctified (that is, made holy or a saint) by the Holy Ghost in Baptism, and is continually *being sanctified*. (Let the class turn to the summary of the Creed in the Catechism and notice what is said of the Holy Ghost: "Who sanctifieth me and all the elect people of God.") Perhaps you think it presumptuous for us to call ourselves "saints" and "elect people." But it is Christ Himself Who calls us so: "Ye are the salt of the earth"; "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father." In these passages He not only marks off His followers as distinct from others, but clearly shows the reason for it. They are not to be holy to themselves in retirement and self-satisfaction, but they are to savour the whole world, to be missioners to the ends of the earth, and not to rest till all men shall be "saints."

III. The Power of any Common Life.—Now let us turn to the more difficult word, "Communion." In one of the Gospels we are told that Christ "knew what was in man"; in other words, He knew what man's nature and natural instincts are like. Some instincts are good—these He heightened and glorified. Some are bad—these He called upon us to fight against. Now among these natural instincts in man there is a deeply implanted desire for *comradeship*. We know this from our earliest childhood. (Get the class to give instances, such as a child's dread of being left alone; the love of school with work and play amongst others of our own age; the pleasure we feel in finding a friend walking in the same direction as ourselves; the pity we feel for an orphan, and even for an only child; the heavy punishment that *solitary* confinement is considered; the dreadful fate of a man cast on a desert island.) We almost need to be deprived of companionship in order to realise how much it means, just as it is only those who have known illness who really value health.

Not only do we get happiness and comfort from living together, but we get a certain force and power and persistence. Hence, you will notice, if we want a thing done we often form a society to do it. Certain people who think alike about something band themselves together to carry out their object. For instance, there are societies for prevention of cruelty to children and to animals; societies for helping people to emigrate; botanical and zoological societies; societies for art and music. (Let the class give other instances; *e.g.* the scout movement.) Now a curious fact about *any* society bound together for some *common* end is this: it is not merely a collection of members, but it seems to have a life and character and soul of its own, and any one joining it seems to take on this character. The whole point of a temperance society is the strength and support that the society gives to weak members. You see this *soul* of a society very clearly in a school: a boy is proud of the achievements of his school in scholarship or games, he will not do anything that may disgrace it, and all through life he glows with warm feeling towards *it*, quite apart from any affection for particular masters or schoolfellows. (An elder class may know something of how professions are banded together; for instance, if a lawyer does anything that is considered unworthy of his profession he can be prevented practising.) The French have a word for this loyalty to a society; they call it "esprit de corps," or the spirit of a united body. Although difficult to express, it is a very real thing, and a very fine unselfish instinct in human nature. You can see it in operation any day on a cricket or football field—a boy sinks himself in the desire for his *side* to win. You can see how it produced the famous reply of the soldier called on to give up his arms, "The Guards die, but they do not surrender." (Henry Newbolt's "Vitaï Lampada" might be read aloud by the teacher.)

IV. The Christian Brotherhood.—Turning to our religious life, we see that although we believe in God as our Father, and Christ as our Saviour, and the Holy Spirit as our Sanctifier, we should miss much if

we did not believe also that we are accompanied by numbers who are situated exactly like ourselves, our brothers and sisters struggling just as we are against sin and ignorance, and bound together by the closest ties —a common faith and a common hope and a common power. Before Christ came, men had been bound together in many different ways, as members of the same family, or of the same nation, or of the same religion (*e.g.* the Jews). But it was Christ Who bound *all* men together, and called *all* men His brothers. To a Christian every man, however distant in country, or different in race and language, is related to him; either he worships Christ in spirit and in truth already, and is in the Communion of Saints; or he does not, and in this case the true Christian's duty is that of a missionary, to bring him into the Communion of Saints. We are all called upon to be missionaries, although it may not mean leaving our own street or our own home.

V. The Multitude that no Man can Number.—The belief in the Communion of Saints also includes something else, a belief that those "who have departed this life in God's faith and fear" (as the prayer for the Church militant says) are united with us in the same great brotherhood. When we come to this clause of the Creed, then, we can think of the millions through the ages who have chanted it before us, and who are worshipping with us *now*, we can think of St. Stephen or Edward VI. or Gordon or Livingstone or Joan of Arc (these names are suggested because they have been mentioned in former lessons, or are likely to be dear to the class; others can be added by the children, from the Bible or elsewhere). Also we can think of those near and dear to us personally, on the other side of death.

VI The Obstacle to Complete Communion.—We are aware how grand this ideal is of the religious brotherhood of man in Christ, and yet we feel that it is far from being realised yet. What is the great obstacle? We can love our brother man in an abstract and general way, but we do not like Charles, we cannot get on with John, and so on. So here we find another characteristic of

man's nature, and that a bad one—our readiness to quarrel, and the ease with which we are offended. Let us see next time how Christ deals with *this* instinct, and turns the struggle with it into a glory of His Church.

ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR CLASS WORK

1. Write out Ephes. ii. 19, 20.

2. Describe any society you know; its objects, meetings, and requirements for membership.

3. Read Ephes. iv. 1-16. Notice the use of the word "saints." Compare the passage with Hymn 274, A. & M.

4. Write out the verses of the "Te Deum" from "We therefore pray Thee" to "lift them up for ever," or the prayer for the Church militant from "We also bless" to "Thy heavenly kingdom."

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—Read in any book on psychology about the "sympathy of numbers." Wordsworth's "We are Seven" illustrates the community of the family. If the class know it (although it is not a child's poem), this idea may be pointed out to them.

LESSON XXV

The Forgiveness of Sins

I. The Forgiveness of Sins.—This phrase needs no explanation; we all know what it means; but why should it be an article of *belief*? Why should it demand our *faith*? When we begin to think carefully about forgiveness, we find it quite difficult to believe. If any one we love very much does something to annoy us, we forgive him so readily that it hardly seems forgiveness at all. But there are some people and some actions that we find very hard to forgive. We may say the words "I forgive," but we do not really feel them. The expression "I cannot forgive So-and-so" is often heard. Similarly there are things we cannot forgive *ourselves* for having done; perhaps we have been unkind to some one whom we shall not be likely to see again to make amends. If we cannot forgive ourselves, we are tempted to feel that we are past God's forgiveness too. Of course we are not, there is no limit to God's forgiveness.

II. Forgiveness is Conditional.—Christ, the great Physician of the soul, met this difficulty in an extraordinary way. He assures us that God forgives us. Yet God forgives all on the condition that we, in our turn, freely forgive others their sins against us. Our Lord did not merely declare this, He emphasised it and taught it in various ways. He actually told us to pray to have our sins forgiven *as* we forgive others. What a terrible prayer it is if we are unforgiving towards any one! We are asking God *not* to forgive us. Our Lord draws special attention to this part of the prayer, and to this part only. (Read St. Matt. vi. 14, 15.) Again, He teaches us that all worship, including of course sincere

repentance, is unacceptable if we have not forgiven any one who has offended us. (See St. Matt. v. 24; St. Mark xi. 25, 26.) The parable of the servant who owed ten thousand talents (question out, read, or tell St. Matt. xviii. 23-35) teaches the same truth and calls attention to the enormous amount of sin each one of us commits compared with the trifling injuries done to us by others. We know how large these injuries by others loom just at the time, and how small they seem a long time afterwards. Our Lord teaches us to make them seem small *now* by comparing them with something so much bigger —namely, all the wrong things we ourselves are continually doing.

III. Forgiveness of Enemies a New Doctrine.—This teaching of forgiveness was quite *new* to the world. Nearly all the great moral truths taught by Christ had been suggested by other teachers in one way or another, but the doctrine of forgiveness was quite contrary to even the best morality of the ancient world. Of course, people forgave their friends; but they did not *wish* to forgive their enemies, nor would they have considered it a virtue to do so—quite the reverse. Some of the noblest of the Jewish prophets had spoken of God's forgiveness. (The class may be able to quote a psalm, such as li., ciii. 12, or Isa. lv. 7.) But the idea of forgiving their enemies was far from them. (The class will have noticed the continual prayers for *vengeance* on enemies that occur in the Psalms.) Reference may also be made to David's desire for vengeance on his enemies as recorded in 1 Kings ii. 1-9 (which shocks us *now*, but did not shock the writer). Among other nations we find revenge not only indulged in but positively regarded as a duty, and a religious duty. If a man were killed, his family was expected to take the life of the man who killed him. Shakespeare's "Hamlet," one of the finest pieces of literature in our language, is written around this subject. The hero's father has been murdered, and he is called upon to revenge the deed by killing the murderer, and he cannot bring himself to do it. Many books and plays have been

written on the theme of revenge (perhaps the class have read some), and they show how widespread the idea has been in the history of the race.

The Jewish Rabbis had made a rule that an offender was to be forgiven three times. St. Peter, who must have vaguely felt that Our Lord would expect more than this, came to Him one day to ask if He would increase the number to seven. But the Christian is to be bound by no such little rules. (Let the class quote Our Lord's answer: St. Matt. xviii. 22.) The doctrine was a startling one. It was only when the Apostles had learned from Our Lord that Love was the fulfilling of the Law that they got the key to the difficulty. If we love our fellow-man, we shall have no difficulty in forgiving him. And so the forgiveness of sins became an article of the faith of the Church.

IV. How to Cultivate the Spirit of Forgiveness.—Refer to the French proverb, "Tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner" ("To understand all is to pardon all"). We cannot always understand why a person is unkind or rude to us, but we can always make an effort to *try* to understand. Sometimes we shall be surprised how readily a reason occurs to us as soon as we seek it; *e.g.* he is worried about something else, he is ill, he has been a little spoilt, perhaps he never *intended* rudeness, perhaps I said or did something to provoke him. If no reason occurs to us, we can say to ourselves, "*If* I knew all, I should pardon." And we who are fellow-members of the communion of saints have a far higher ground for forgiving one another than even understanding; we forgive each other simply because we are both of us members of Christ.

V. How the Church Administers God's Forgiveness.—Christ taught His Apostles to preach the forgiveness of sins, and He gave them express authority to "absolve" sinners.

Let the class turn again to the "Ordering of Priests," look at the words spoken at the laying-on of hands, and notice that this authority to administer God's forgiveness is placed first.

Let them turn to Morning and Evening Prayer and notice how each begins with an invitation to sincere repentance, then confession, and then absolution.

[*Note.*—An elder class may find it interesting to compare the forms of Absolution in the Morning Prayer, the Communion Service, and the Visitation of the Sick, and to notice how the words of simple declaration in the first change to direct absolution in the last.]

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Learn by heart the forms of Absolution in Morning Prayer, the Communion Service, and the Visitation of the Sick.

2. Write out and learn Ephes. iv. 32.

3. Copy out Psalm ciii. 8-14.

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—Read St. Matt. xviii. 15-17, and think out the connection between reproof or discipline and forgiveness. A question on this point might be raised by an intelligent pupil, and the teacher should be ready for discussion.

LESSON XXVI

The Life of the World to Come

Introduction.—We have now reached the last clause of the Creed, which comes as a triumphant climax: "I believe in the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting"; or in the more beautiful wording of the Nicene Creed, "I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come."

The poet Keble, in some verses on the Marriage in Cana, compares God's gifts to the wine at the feast—the best is kept till last. The Creed rolls out for us as in a triumphal song the gifts of God, every one of them the outcome of His being our Father, and ends with the gift of eternal life.

I. Resurrection not a New Doctrine.—While the idea of universal brotherhood and unlimited forgiveness was new to the world, the expectation of life beyond the grave was not new. God has planted this hope in some form or other in every human being; indeed, life would be almost intolerable without it; and it may be doubted whether any sane man ever believed that death ends all, whatever he may *say* he believes.

II. Primitive Ideas.—Different nations have had widely different ideas as to the nature of the future life, some of them very strange and crude; but they all show how persistent and universal the belief is. Our English forefathers, the worshippers of Odin and Thor, believed in a heaven, Valhalla, where the bliss consisted in perpetual triumphing over their enemies and feasting. The ancient Greeks imagined a future existence from which all the energy and interest of life had been taken. In Homer's story of the wanderings of Ulysses, the hero visits the world of the dead,

and finds them leading a kind of shadowy half-life, the chief characteristic being dulness and boredom. He meets a man with whom he had quarrelled, and attempts to be reconciled with him, but fails, because "the resentments of the dead are eternal."

[*Note.*—The teacher can further illustrate the point by reference to any ideas of a future life held by other nations with which he is acquainted, through missionary work or otherwise. It is worth while to spend some time in emphasising this widespread belief in immortality.]

III Ideas of Great Thinkers.—Not only is a belief in immortality found in the early days of civilised races, and in savage races, but we find it in a still more striking way when men began to *reason* about life. (Ask the class what ancient nation had carried reasoning to greatest perfection.) The wisest of the Greeks was put to death on account of his opinions; there are few scenes more interesting and pathetic to read than the farewell of Socrates to his friends, before he is given the fatal cup of hemlock. "How shall we bury you?" one friend asked him. "As you please," said Socrates, "only you must catch me first, and not let me escape you. I shall not remain with you after I have drunk the poison, but shall go away to the happiness of the blessed. . . . To use words wrongly is not only a fault in itself; it also creates evil in the soul. You must be of good cheer, and say you are burying *my body*; and you must bury it as you please."

IV. How Christianity Affected the Belief in the Resurrection.—But the great mass of mankind are not philosophers, and as men began to lose faith in their early and fanciful ideas of a future state, they had no sure and certain hope to take its place, and in the Roman Empire at the time of Christ we find generally a kind of mournful resignation in the face of death. What great change did Christianity bring? It can be stated very simply and shortly: *Christ rose from the dead.* St. Paul's frequently quoted words express exactly what happened: "Our Saviour Jesus Christ has abolished death, and has brought life and immortality to light."

In the Catacombs at Rome.

V. The Confident Hope of the Christians.—If we want to see how confident the Christians were in the continued life after death, we must read some of the inscriptions on their graves. Now it so happens that there are hundreds of these to be found. Let the teacher ask the class if they have heard of the Catacombs at Rome. There is a vast underground city beneath the streets of Rome, and stretching far out beneath its suburbs and the green fields beyond; an interminable labyrinth of passages branching out from one another, or ending in blind alleys; sometimes opening out into rooms; steps lead up and down, for some passages rise in tiers above others. On every side are countless graves, for the most part arranged, like berths in a ship, in stone shelves in the walls, three or four or even six in number from floor to roof, where the dead have been placed and sealed in. The dark and dangerous passages were used as hiding-places by any vagabonds, thieves, or outlaws of Rome, and it was here that the persecuted Christians held their secret meetings, and laid their martyrs to rest. It was almost impossible to catch anyone who took refuge in these places, for if the lamps of the little church, or the chanting of hymns, attracted the attention of the persecutors the Christians had only to disperse into various dark alleys; it was fatal to pursue them, for if anyone were lost in these mazes there was little hope of finding the way out again. It is said that several modern visitors to Rome have lost their lives in this way, by venturing into the Catacombs without a guide. (Show picture.)

It was here among these gloomy surroundings, and in the midst of a fierce persecution, that the Christians wrote on the graves of those who had been torn from them by a cruel death some of the most peaceful and hopeful epitaphs that have ever been known. Here are a few: "Aselus sleeps in Christ." "Clementia, tortured, dead, sleeps; will rise." "Primitius, in peace; after many torments, a most valiant martyr." "In Christ; Pompeianus the Innocent, who lived six years, nine months, eight days, and four hours. He sleeps in peace."

There is one of these inscriptions that is particularly beautiful; it consists of only one word: "Vivit." This is the Latin for "He lives." It is interesting to contrast this word with the way in which a pagan Roman used to express death. A Roman would not like to say "He has died," it sounded too dreadful; and so he would say "Vixit," which means "He *has* lived." This vague terror of the unknown was changed for the sure and certain hope of the Christian, and we can hardly express the change more clearly than by saying that the "Vixit" of the heathen became the "Vivit" of the Christian.

VI. The Life of the World to Come.—What will our future life be like? It is a question that has the most intense interest for all of us. We naturally turn to what Our Lord tells us about it, and are perhaps surprised to find how seldom He even refers to it. (Ask the class to quote any passage they remember. Read aloud St. John xiv. 2, 3.) We may surely gather from these words that there will be variety, as in this life; that we shall not all lead the same kind of existence. Also that we shall have Christ's presence. From the parable of the pounds (St. Luke xix. 12-26) we can also gather that reward will be work—more work and more responsibility: "Thou hast been faithful in a very little; have thou authority over ten cities." Give the class time to look over the parable and find this point for themselves.

VII. Treasures in Heaven.—Notice some other words of Our Lord about Heaven. Read aloud St. Matt. vi. 19, 20. We ourselves are to take part in "preparing a place." Whilst here on earth we are to lay up treasures in heaven. Ask the class to express their ideas as to what this means. The words are so familiar that they are apt to pass over our minds without conveying *any* idea. They must mean more than "Be good and God will reward you." Heavenly treasures are contrasted with things that can be stolen, or ruined by lying by unused. Now, there are certain things that *cannot* be stolen or ruined—all kindness to

others above everything, whether to passing strangers or to those we know, leading to the heavenly treasures of friendship and goodwill; all right and noble knowledge; all kinds of noble skill, even in games; all kinds of interest in and love of the beautiful in Nature and art. Surely we may imagine that such as these are among the treasures of heaven. It has been said that it is better policy to acquire an interest than to make a thousand pounds—you may spend or lose the money, but the interest is imperishable and is a joy for ever. We need not suppose that our future life is to consist only of religious exercises; Christ taught us to make *everything* religious by thinking of it as heavenly and thus attracting our hearts away from dwelling on money and other earthly things, like food and clothes, that have only value for the time—for where your treasure is, said He, there will your heart be also.

These ideas about a future life are quite enough for us, and we are evidently not intended to know any more. Each of us can imagine the fields of work we would like to enter into. As we grow older we all find earthly duties pressing on us more and more, giving us less and less time to indulge our taste for reading, or art, or music, or travel, or engineering. Never mind; if we are only trying to be faithful in our "very little" (and sometimes our duties seem indeed very petty), if, in short, we are seeking first to do what is right, or "God's righteousness," all these things will be added unto us.

The great Italian artist, Andrea del Sarto, who was prevented from doing his best work, is pictured by the poet Browning as looking forward to painting in heaven.

> In heaven, perhaps, new chances, one more chance—
> Four great walls in the New Jerusalem,
> Meted on each side by the angel's reed,
> For Leonard, Rafael, Agnolo, and me
> To cover.

(The teacher should be able to say a word about each of these artists, if asked.)

There is another piece of poetry with which we will end the lesson. Perhaps some of you can learn it by heart, and it may come to your mind in later years when you are in need of comfort. Let the teacher read as impressively as possible Rev. vii. 14-17, "These are they . . . and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Write out and learn 1 Cor. ii. 9. Find the place in the Old Testament that St. Paul is quoting.
2. Learn Rev. vii. 14-17.
3. Learn Vaughan's "My soul, there is a country."
4. Write down the epitaph you like best of those quoted from the Catacombs. Also one you have noticed and liked in your own churchyard.
5. Look at the opening sentences in the "Order for the Burial of the Dead," and find the places in the Bible.

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—"Christian Year," Second Sunday after Epiphany. 1 Cor. xv. 20-58; G. Herbert's "The Flower."

LESSON XXVII

Duty—Its Development and Glory

Introduction.—Let the class turn to the third answer in the Catechism, in order to review once more the general plan. We have spent some time considering what we must *renounce* and *believe*; we now come to the third part of our vow, what we must *do*. Let one of the class repeat from memory "and thirdly. . . days of my life." For the next few lessons, then, we will talk about our *duty*.

I. The Word Duty.—What does the word *duty* mean? You know how oddly words change in shape as they pass from one language to another, getting altered as they are used. The word *duty* was originally the same as the word *have*. So our duty is no more nor less than what we *have* to do, or as we sometimes forcibly say, "I have *got* to do so and so."

II. The Mysterious "Ought."—Did you ever ask yourselves "Why *have* we to do anything at all?" If you say "Because we ought," it only changes the word. "Why *ought* we to do anything?" It is clear that our mysteries are not all limited to the Creed. Here we find a very deep one, not confined to Christianity, or to any religion or race or time. Every person we have ever heard of has had a sense of duty, a feeling that he ought to do certain things rather than others. No one has been able to explain this, any more than he can explain life or death; very often when a simple thing cannot be accounted for, people have to be content with a long name for it. Philosophers have called this sense of duty "the fundamental ought," and again "the categorical imperative" (which only means an absolute command binding every one). Conscience is another name for the same thing.

[*Note.*—These words are not important to remember, but they impress the fact that the "ought" is acknowledged by all.]

So wonderful and mysterious is this compelling force that the philosopher Kant used to say that two things filled his soul with overpowering awe: the majestic movements of the stars above him, and the moral law within.

Read aloud the following verse from Wordsworth's "Ode to Duty":

> Stern Lawgiver! Yet thou dost wear
> The Godhead's most benignant grace;
> Nor know we anything so fair
> As is the smile upon thy face:
> Flowers laugh before Thee on their beds,
> And fragrance in Thy footing treads;
> Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong;
> And the most ancient heavens, through Thee, are
> fresh and strong.

III. How the Sense of Duty Grows.—In the Race.—The poet, you see, regards duty as God-given And we often speak of conscience as the voice of God. How is it, then, that conscience varies so much in different people, and at different times, if it is the voice of God? Let the class think this over, and express their ideas, if any. Then suggest the following as a partial explanation.

No person can speak to another except in a language that is understood. God speaks to man as man is able to understand. Recall to the class the crude ideas of God in the early history of the race; Christ came when man was able to understand better. (See lesson on the Incarnation.) In the same way, man's idea of duty has grown and developed. For instance, a man's duty to his family led gradually to a sense of duty towards the larger kind of family, the nation; and then, later, to a sense of duty towards all mankind. Now, the duty towards his family used to lead a man to *avenge* a murder; if one of his family was killed he felt obliged to kill the murderer (see Numbers xxxv. 9 ff). This duty of private vengeance passed away when men lived under the protection of a national Government. We look for-

ward to the time when man's sense of duty will be so widened that war will appear as crude and unreasonable as the early family vengeance does to us now.

Religious persecution was done as a duty. (St. Paul may be instanced, and Queen Mary, and St. John xvi. 2 quoted.) Now we hope it is almost a thing of the past.

IV. In the Individual.—If we turn from mankind to our single selves, we see a similar growth in our sense of duty. A little child feels "good" when he does what he is told; as he grows older he finds that different people tell him different things, then he must decide which voice to obey; later still he has to obey what Emerson called "the hardest task-master of all," himself, or as we should say, his own conscience.

> When duty whispers low, "Thou must,"
> The youth replies, "I can."

It is, as you know, a commonplace remark that our conscience can become quick and sensitive, *or* it can become dulled. It is not, of course, that God changes, but we can gradually become more and more able to understand Him by attending and listening, or less able by neglecting to do so; exactly as we learn or forget any language at all. (It can never be too often impressed upon the class that God never compels us, but that He respects the free wills of His children.)

V. The Heroism of Duty.—Perhaps we are sometimes apt to think that obedience and duty are after all dull and dreary affairs, calling for no enthusiasm and stirring us to no deeds of heroism. But the daily round of humblest duty may at any moment be an opportunity for supreme bravery or self-sacrifice. (Let the class give some instances from their own reading, if possible.) The following may be referred to as cases where nothing beyond the every-day duty was required:

John Maynard was the ordinary helmsman when the vessel took fire, and he saved all on board by keeping at his post so as to guide the boat to shore, though he himself was burned to death. The man whose duty it was to attend to the wireless telegraph on board the *Titanic* kept at his post sending messages of call for help, which

were received by other ships—he himself was drowned. The story of the children of Blentarn Ghyll (given in Charlotte Yonge's "Golden Deeds") might be shortly told to a younger class in this connection.

VI. The Daily Round the Root of Heroism.—In cases of sudden danger there is always a certain amount of excitement that keeps us going and strings us up. It may be that in God's eyes the every-day common round is just as glorious as these special occasions; to go on with our duty when we are not enthusiastic, and when no one can be admiring us, is heroic in itself. It is certainly the devotion to every-day duty that steadies us, and prepares our soul for great trials.

Thus, it was the regular drill of every day that enabled the English soldiers at Waterloo to stand still hour after hour to be fired at, without moving from their places. If they had moved, the battle would have been lost.

It was the regular obedience of every day that enabled a schoolroom full of children to sit quietly in their seats when fire broke out. If they had moved in a panic, many might have been injured.

The class can be led to see by these and any other kindred illustrations that it is not the *occasion* that makes the hero, but the taking up the cross *daily*, as Our Lord expressed it. Perhaps the most heroic duty of all is to wait in patience or enforced idleness. Sometimes a boy or girl of your age has to lie for months on a sick-bed, or to endure some other apparent "waste of time." The poet Milton had a terrible affliction of this kind (the class may perhaps know of his blindness), and this is how he brought himself to think about it:

> God doth not need
> Either man's work, or his own gifts. Who best
> Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state
> Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed,
> And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
> They also serve who only stand and wait.

These lines are a little difficult to learn by heart, but they will repay the trouble.

VII. Devotion to Duty an English Ideal.—The English as a nation have always held the performance of duty in highest respect. Just as a French soldier's watch-word is "glory," an English soldier's is certainly "duty." Nelson's famous signal to the fleet at Trafalgar never fails to stir us: it seems to be addressed to us personally and always. Our country expects every one of us, every day, to be doing his duty. Instance also the pride English sailors take in saving women and children first at a wreck, and the captain takes in being the last to leave his ship. Again, it was Wellington's devotion to duty that is the chief thought running through Tennyson's ode on the death of the great Duke:—

> Not once or twice in our fair island-story
> The path of duty was the way to glory:
> He, that ever following her commands,
> On with toil of heart and knees and hands,
> Through the long gorge to the far light has won
> His path upward, and prevailed,
> Shall find the toppling crags of Duty scaled
> Are close upon the shining table-lands
> To which our God Himself is moon and sun.

Shortly after the loss of the *Birkenhead* (when officers and men, lined up on deck, saw the women and children saved, and went down with a cheer), a celebrated clergyman referred to the event in these words, "Yes! Goodness, Duty, Sacrifice—these are the qualities that England honours. She knows how to teach her sons to sink like men amidst sharks and billows, without parade, without display, as if Duty were the most natural thing in the world."

VIII. Duty the Highest Possible Ideal.—Ask the class to consider whether "doing one's duty" is a moderate ideal or a very high one. You hear a man say "I was *only* doing my duty," as if it were no great thing. But we must remember that *as soon as we see an action to be right it becomes our duty to do it.* It was Father Damien's *duty* to go and live with the lepers. We cannot judge about other people, but if *we* see a thing to be right and fail to do it, we sin. The teacher may tell the class that the literal meaning of "sin" is to miss the

mark; so then to perceive the right and to miss doing it is to sin. There is, therefore, for each one of us, no higher ideal than to do our duty, the very best that we know. Close the lesson with Our Lord's words: "When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say: We have done that which was our duty to do." (St. Luke xvii. 10.)

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Copy out and learn the piece of poetry you like best quoted in this lesson.
2. Write shortly any one story you know of devotion to duty.
3. Say in your own words what you mean by a "conscientious" person.
4. Learn Ps. cxix. 89-96.

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—Read the whole poems from which the above extracts are quoted. Find out what story-books the children have been reading lately, and if suitable illustrate the lesson with some heroic deeds from these.

A Scene in the Mount Sinai Region.

LESSON XXVIII

The Importance of the Ten Commandments in the History of the World

Introduction.—We saw last time that our duty is to follow the very highest and best that we know. It is evidently our duty also to try to seek and understand the best. So for the next few lessons we will discuss together some of the highest ideals of Christian conduct, as far as we can grasp them. To-day we will take a general glance at this subject in our Catechism. Let the class turn to it, and notice that the part allotted to duty consists of the Ten Commandments and the explanation of them.

I. When, Where, and to Whom the Commandments were First Given.—Let us try to picture the circumstances in which these Commandments were first given to the world. The Israelites, the people chosen by God to receive them, had not reached a very high standard of morals; the class can recall from the early stories of Abraham and Jacob that truth and honesty were not held in high esteem; and Moses, the noblest of the race, killed a man in a fit of temper (Ex. ii. 12). The *time* chosen for receiving the Commandments was a kind of breathing-space between two important periods of this nation's history. They had been in Egypt for hundreds of years, learning many of the arts of civilisation, but learning also many false notions of the worship of God, especially that of representing Him by an image of an animal or other natural object. They were travelling towards Canaan, where they were to face further temptations to worship God in gross and superstitious ways.

(The class will know of the long struggle against Baal worship.) The *place* chosen was the wilderness. It is certain that men can think more clearly and wisely when they are alone with Nature, leading an abstemious, open-air life, far from temptations of town life; and it was in such a place that Moses, their God-sent leader, trained the Israelites to receive this great possession.

II. The Importance of the Commandments.—We are so accustomed to the Commandments that we hardly realise their grandeur.

It is to be noted that even at the early time when the Commandments were given, religion was based on God's love—"I am the Lord thy God who brought thee out . . ."—and not on His omnipotence.

The worship of God is closely connected with righteousness; or as we sometimes say, religion and goodness must go together. You will say "Of course." But it was by no means of course in those days.

Many ancient religions required no holiness of life, but only superstitious services and even worse. (Human sacrifice *may* be mentioned if the children ask, but should be very slightly referred to, as it is not a healthy subject for thought.) This binding together of worship and goodness marks an important stage in the progress of man, and as important to-day as ever it was. There have always been people who try to separate religion and morality; some say "No matter what you believe so long as you do what is right"; and there are others, again, who think that it does not matter how often you do wrong, so long as you believe rightly and perform your religious duties carefully.

How does Our Lord treat this matter? What did He say when He was asked "Which is the greatest Commandment?" (Let the class quote St. Mark xii. 30, 31. If the quotation does not come readily, let it be learned by heart.)

[*Note.*—The above paragraph should be omitted with a class near the younger limit of age, and the following paragraph taken more fully.]

III. How the Jews Honoured the Commandments.—The Jews were not allowed to worship God in any outward form, but they were permitted certain outward ceremonies, and they had priests and sacrifices and a place for worship. Let the class tell something of the Tabernacle, the Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies. What was in this Holy of Holies? (Draw a rough sketch of the Ark on the board from the accompanying illustration.) What was placed in the Ark? Each thing was an object-lesson. The pot of manna reminded them of God's loving care; the rod, of His power; the Tables of the Law, of His requirement of righteousness. Impress on the class the deep significance of the Commandments being placed in the Sacred Ark.

The *Scribes* were a class of men set aside to write out and study the Law. *Phylacteries* were another means used by the Jews for honouring the Law. These were little parchment boxes, containing passages of the Law, fastened on the forehead and on the left arm; an attempt being made to carry out literally the words of Deut. vi. 8, xi. 18. (Read or quote these verses; and draw, or show, picture of a phylactery.)

The passionate devotion of the Jews to their Law became far more marked after they had lost their independence and had been in captivity among heathen nations. (Let the class say when this happened and where they went.) The Law became their one great national distinction, and they clung to it in a spirit of patriotism, as other nations do to their country. Remind the class of the frequent reference in the Psalms to the Law of God. Psalm cxix. is entirely on the subject. One of the most beautiful is Psalm xix. Let the class turn to this and glance over it, noticing how it shows God revealed, first in His natural laws and secondly in His moral law.

IV. How Christ Honoured the Commandments.—Ask the class to recall any occasions when Our Lord spoke about the Commandments. Let us try to understand how He regarded them. Did He value them, or did

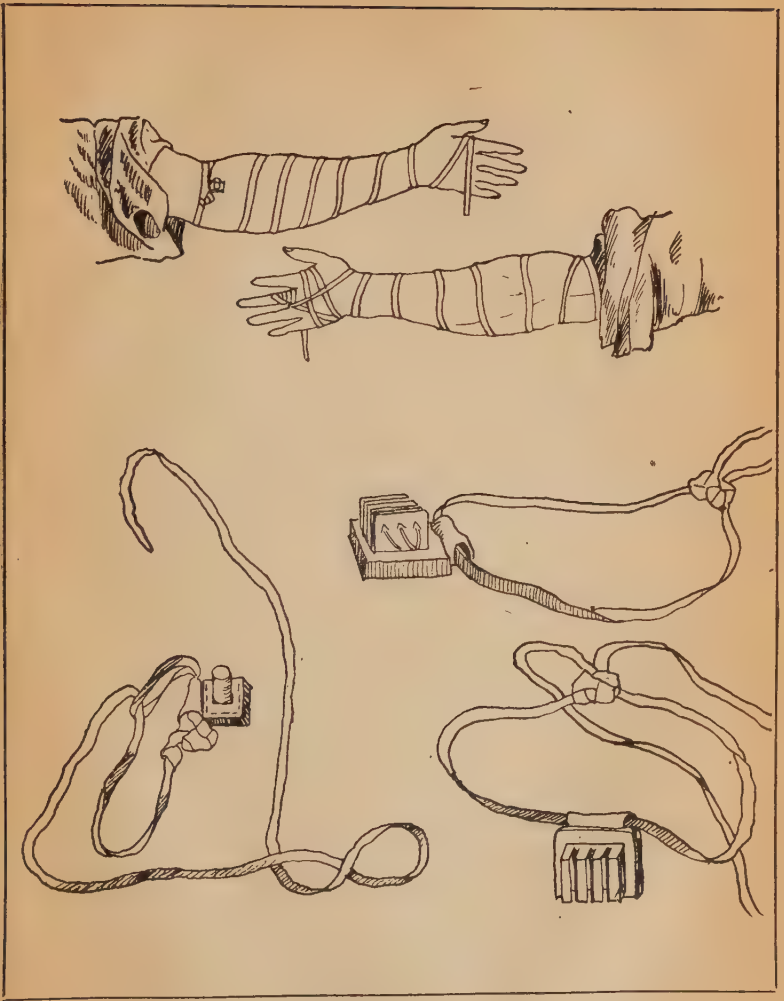
He lay down fresh laws that made the old ones unnecessary? In the Sermon on the Mount we have as it were a collection of Our Lord's great principles of conduct; and in the midst of them we find these words, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law; I am not come to destroy but to fulfil" (St. Matt. v. 17). To the Pharisees He said, "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass than one tittle of the law to fail" (St. Luke xvi. 17). To the rich young ruler He said, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments," and when the ruler asked "Which?" Jesus said, "Thou shalt do no murder" and so on, rehearsing them to him (St. Matt. xix. 17). Other passages can be quoted also showing Our Lord's supreme regard for the Ten Commandments.

V. How He Fulfilled Them.—In what way did Christ fulfil the Commandments? In what ways did He fill out their meaning and expand them, to meet the growing need of mankind? The class will probably have some suggestions to make that the teacher can use. If not very ready with replies, they should open their Catechism and compare the Ten Commandments with the explanation, and the following points should be drawn out.

1. *Negative Commands become Positive.*—The word "not" is a mark of an early stage. We have to learn to refrain from obvious wrong-doing before we can spread forth into right-doing. Man must learn not to strike and kill before he can think about building a hospital. A little child must learn not to snatch before he can be taught to give and share. Christian duties as reflected in the explanation open up paths for good action, in addition to warning from evil, as we shall see more in detail in later lessons.

2. *Not only Deeds, but Motives and Feelings.*—Killing another now includes hurting by word, being angry without a cause (St. Matt. v. 22), keeping hatred in the heart without expressing it.

3. *Who is my Neighbour?*—Another great expansion is from the narrow circle of the family (honouring father



PHYLACTERIES.

and mother) to the other people who govern and help us in the nation (king, clergy, teachers, masters). And still more strikingly from the narrow meaning of the word "neighbour" among the Jews, to the "all men" of the explanation. The parable of the Good Samaritan taught this truth so vividly that it is quite impossible for us to think our duty confined to people of our own nation, or to white people, or to *any* less than the whole of mankind.

VI. How the Church Honours the Ten Commandments.—If Our Lord has widened and fulfilled the old laws given to the Jews so long ago, why do we still keep them in their old form? Why do we not learn and recite some of Our Lord's own sayings instead? Let the class turn over their Prayer-books to find the places where the Ten Commandments occur. In the *Catechism* and in the *Communion Service*. We give them to the children to learn as their first rule of life, and we place them in front of our most sacred service. There must be strong reasons for this. Let the class give suggestions. All Our Lord's principles of conduct were extensions of the early Commandments, not contradictions; and Christians remember His words about anger and quarrelling when they hear "Thou shalt do no murder," and so these early Commandments sum up His teaching for us quite completely, and as we grow older we read more and more in them, in a really far more progressive way than if we selected some *one* saying of Our Lord's instead.

Another reason for the learning and public reading of the old Commandments is this: Most of us lead fairly quiet and sheltered lives; we feel no temptation to such sins as murder and stealing; but we cannot fail to know that such sins are daily committed even in countries called Christian. Surely many a terrible temptation is resisted by the continual reminder of these ancient and most sacred laws. Even when people do not often go to church and hear them, they know that the Commandments are constantly read there; and the very sight of

the church building is enough to remind them of these eternal landmarks of right conduct.

[*Note.*—An elder class will be interested to know that the public reading of the Ten Commandments at Holy Communion was ordered at the time of the Reformation (1552).]

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Learn Ps. cxix. 105-112, or Ps. xix.
2. Draw the Ark, and write underneath what was kept in it.
3. Find some words of Christ's to show how He honoured the Ten Commandments.
4. Illuminate the First Commandment.

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—Nehemiah viii. gives a vivid description of the affection of the Jews for the Law. St. Mark vii. 1-13 shows how Christ repudiated the "traditions" that had accumulated round the Law.

LESSON XXIX

My Duty towards God

Introduction—We saw last time that our duty falls naturally into two great divisions: what we owe to God, and what we owe to man. Let one of the class repeat Our Lord's answer to the question, "Which is the greatest Commandment?" Let them open their Bibles at Deut. vi. 4, 5; St. Mark xii. 29, 30; and the Catechism at the "Duty towards God," and notice how the passages correspond. Our Lord was evidently quoting Deuteronomy, and the Catechism follows Our Lord's words. Notice how the addition (*mind*) is made by Our Lord, repeated by the scribe, and preserved in the Catechism. It is this duty to God that we will consider to-day.

I. An Ideal for Each of Us.—Words with which we are very familiar are rather apt to lose their force, or fail to make us realise their meaning. We are told here quite simply that the *chief* thing a person has to do in this world is to love God; and to love Him with every power he has. Ask the class if they consider that this is really a demand made on everybody, or only a great ideal for specially good and holy people. The Catechism leaves no doubt on the matter. The same boy who is asked his name at the beginning is expected to say "*My* duty towards God is . . ." So it is for each of us, and we must try to understand its meaning. We are apt to think of the word "duty" almost entirely in connection with our fellow-man and our work, and to forget that the greatest Commandment is concerned with our duty to God.

II. Religion the Chief Thing in Life.—According to Christ's standard, our religion is the most important thing in our life. People sometimes say, "What I admire is the *practical* Christian, one who thinks more of doing good deeds to others than of going to church so much." There is justice in a preference for good deeds as compared with *mere* words or professions, but the great point to remember is that at the root of all true religion lies love—love to God and love to man. If we really love God, we cannot but rejoice in His worship. We cannot help our whole life being, so to speak, a continual prayer; and if we love our fellow-man our love will show itself in good deeds. Moreover, the better we are, the more we shall be ready to confess that we need help to lead a good life. The Church—with her Bible, her Sacraments, and her Services—exists to furnish the help we need, and if we neglect these "means of grace," it is only too likely that our love towards God may cool and our love for man be lost in love for ourselves. It has been said that to desert your prayers in order to have more time for good works is like an engineer on a liner who should put out his furnace-fires and try to row the ship. He would look very practical, busy, and energetic. But the really practical man is the one who heaps on the fuel. So the really practical Christian is one who never neglects prayer, Holy Scripture, and Communion. We are to seek first the kingdom of God, and all the other parts of our life will follow naturally.

III. "All."—Call the attention of the class to the word "all" repeated four times. Does this mean that we are to love no one else but God? No: we often speak of loving a person, or a subject of study, with all our heart; it does not mean that we love nothing else. On the contrary, love is peculiar in this way—that the more you give the more you have. Perhaps the children have heard it compared to flowers—there is an old saying that the more you pick and give away from your own garden, the faster they grow. If you have any subject of study, or hobby, that takes your affection, you notice how all other subjects seem to throw light on

it and become interesting for its sake.* Loving God, then, with *all* our heart, mind, soul, and strength means that He is our supreme desire and interest, and gradually, as we learn more and more about Him, we connect all our life with Him.

IV. Ways of Expressing our Love to God.—The idea of loving God is such a large and difficult one to grasp that the Catechism has broken it up for us into separate thoughts. Let the class now turn to the second half of the duty towards God, and notice the words "worship," "give thanks," "put trust in," "call upon," "honour," "serve." These are like the various colours that make the white light of love. We can look at each one separately and so get a closer and fuller notion of what our love to God should be. Notice that in each one of these there is something for us to *do*, quite irrespective of our feelings. We are always apt to fancy that our feelings are very important, and so of course they are, but they are not the chief thing, and we must not try to force them. If we follow out cheerfully and willingly the duties suggested here, the feeling of love to God will come at its own natural time. The six aspects of our duty to God named in the Catechism (worship, thanksgiving, trust, prayer, honour, service) we will think about in turn. Thanksgiving and prayer must be left for fuller treatment in later lessons. To-day we will think about worship and trust, and next time about honour and service.

V. Worship as a Duty.—Here is a definite side of our duty to God that can be carried out regardless of the *feeling* of the moment. Ask the class to say what they think "worship" includes. Their answers will probably show that they look upon it as an outward act—*e.g.* "going to church," "saying one's prayers," keeping the Church seasons. If so, it would be well to emphasise this side of worship, and point out that it forms the most outward and public part of our love

* There was an instance lately of a lazy boy at a school who suddenly began to work hard at arithmetic, geometry, algebra, and science; his puzzled teachers found that he had taken an interest in aeroplanes, and wanted to make one himself.

for God. Lead the class to consider the reason for showing our love to God by public worship; or, in other words, why should we go to church, and not worship God only in private? We help and encourage one another; a large congregation is inspiriting; the effect of sitting next any one who sings as well as he can and joins in all the responses is quite astonishing. Our Lord told us to pray in secret with our door closed; and so we do. He also said, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father," and perhaps we may consider a hearty joining in public worship as one way of doing this. Sometimes we do not *feel* inclined to go to church, or, when there, to join in the prayers and praises. But let us always remember that feeling is not the chief thing, but *willing* to do what is right; and perhaps the struggle to do our best when least inclined is more acceptable to God than the singing of a hymn that we greatly enjoy.

VI. Trust as a Duty.—To put our whole trust in God is not always an easy duty. It seems a happy and natural state of mind when all goes well with us; but the difficulty comes when we are ill, or badly treated by others, or unsuccessful. We may be tempted to think that God is too great to concern Himself with our small affairs, and thus to doubt His love for us. On the other hand, you hear people sometimes say, "We are all very well and happy, but I am afraid to say it, lest something should happen." As if God were waiting to afflict any one who is too cheerful and joyous! This is really a remnant of the old Greek idea that the gods were jealous if a man were too prosperous, and some sacrifice had to be made in consequence. All superstitions are apiece with some such pagan ideas, and should not be indulged in seriously enough to affect one's actions. (The class can give illustrations of some other common superstitions.)

There are two sayings of two of God's greatest saints that are well worth remembering: Job said, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him" (Job xiii. 15);

and St. Paul, "All things work together for good to them that love God" (Rom. viii. 28). It would be hard to find men who suffered greater extremes of apparent ill-fortune than these two. (Let the class tell in what ways. If they cannot do this easily, let the teacher be ready to tell a few vivid incidents from the lives of Job and St. Paul.)

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Write out "My duty towards God," underlining, or writing in coloured chalk, the verbs.
2. Write down the names of any people (in Bible or other history) who trusted God when things were very black.
3. Write out the clause of the Litany: "In all time of our tribulation . . ." Think over why we pray to be delivered in time of wealth.
4. Learn G. Herbert's "Pulley."
5. Print or illuminate Prov. xviii. 10.

Suggestion for Teacher's Study.—Be able to answer No. 2 of above exercises very fully yourself; the following instances may be used as further illustrations of Paragraph VI., or suggested to the class for home-work: David (1 Sam. xvii. 45); Elijah (1 Kings xvii.); Hezekiah (2 Kings xix.); the "Three" (Daniel iii. 17); Daniel (vi. 20).

LESSON XXX

Honouring His Holy Name and His Word

Introduction.—Let the class open their books at the "duty towards God." So far we have been considering the ideas of *worship* and *trust* as parts of our love of God. Leaving "giving thanks" and "calling upon Him" till later, we now pass on to the words "honour His holy Name and His Word."

I. God's Name.—As we saw at the beginning of our work on the Catechism, a *name* stands for a person. To honour God's Name means to honour God wherever and whenever we see Him, or, as we often say, to have a spirit of reverence.

II. What is Reverence?—In its very nature reverence is a mixture of love and fear; of attraction to a thing and of drawing away from it; of interest and of awe. Get the class to recall such a feeling they may have had on entering a cathedral, or on seeing some grand view, or picture, or hearing beautiful music. We feel intensely interested, but at the same time we advance quietly and slowly, lower our voices or remain silent.

III. Reverence has Developed.—Now, in an early stage of the history of mankind the element of *fear* greatly outweighed the other. It was doubtless necessary that it should be so in a rough and lawless time. The fear of the Lord is the *beginning* of wisdom. The Name of God was held in special awe. Ask the class if they know the Name by which God was known to the Hebrews. No one is sure of it to this day; the true pronunciation has been entirely lost, the Jews themselves scrupulously avoiding all mention of it, and putting one or other of the words that would fit the consonants J, V, H. (Let the class give Jehovah, Jah,

Jahveh.) The words of Lev. xxiv. 16 give us an idea of the terror felt by the Jews in this matter. The Scribes who copied the holy writings never wrote the letters representing the Name immediately after dipping their pen in the ink, lest they should make a blot. According to Jewish tradition it was pronounced but once a year by the high-priest on the day of Atonement, when he entered the Holy of Holies. After the destruction of Jerusalem, the true pronunciation was entirely lost. The class will have noticed how in the Old Testament God is usually spoken of as the "Lord" in capital letters.

As time went on, and as man came to have better conceptions of God, as a loving Father rather than as an avenging Judge, *love* became an ever-larger element in reverence, but it was when our Lord came that man received the fuller revelation of the Fatherhood of God. We are no longer afraid to speak of Him, though English people are naturally reserved about their religion. But when we care intensely for any one we are not likely to speak of him carelessly or irreverently; and the fear of doing so leads some of us perhaps to say too little about God in our daily life, and consequently, often, to *think* too little. We really reverence God most when we try to see Him in all we do. We must not make a hard-and-fast line between religious work and other work.

IV. All School Studies are Religious.—Let the class name some of their studies and make suggestions for themselves—*e.g. Science* or Nature-study shows us how God works by wonderful laws, and as each one dawns upon us it seems more miraculous than miracle. *History* shows us God's judgments in the lives of men and nations; how the sins of the fathers are visited on the children, and how mercy is shown to thousands who try to do right in scorn of consequence. Every new *language* we learn is a new "eye to the soul" for understanding our fellow-men and strengthening the feeling of brotherhood.

In this way, though we may not have God consciously in our thoughts, the thought of Him is "at the back of our mind," as we say, all the time, instead of occurring

to us only at some great crisis or danger. Let the class turn to the probably familiar Collect at the close of the Communion Service—"Prevent us, O Lord," and read it again with this idea. Explain that "prevent" means "go before," and call attention to the expression that we can glorify God's Holy Name in *all* our works.

V. The Christian Idea of Reverence, then, is not merely to mark off certain things, certain days, certain studies, as sacred; but to endeavour to permeate all our life with religion and so make everything sacred. And to foster our love for God by studying all we can about Him, and, above all, by listening to His voice and *letting Him speak to us.*

> Think you, midst all this mighty sum
> Of things for ever speaking,
> That nothing of itself will come,
> But we must still be seeking?

This brings us to the next words of the Catechism. We are to honour

VI. God's Word.—What does this mean? The class will probably say the Bible. Yes, this is very specially God's Word, and so large a matter that we must leave it for a separate lesson. To-day we will think of some other ways in which God speaks to us. The lines of Wordsworth just read will suggest that God speaks to us through Nature. This is a different affair from our Nature-study or Science; it is letting Nature speak to us and teach us in all its varying moods. Ask the class if this is not the case with some of them. (Very often young people do not care about Nature in this way, the activity of town life attracting them more with all its human interests. As we grow older, however, Nature has more to say to us, and even now the love of it can be cultivated.)

VII. Our Lord Teaches us to Love Nature.—Let the class give as many proofs as possible of this. The following points may be referred to: The lost sheep, the sparrows, the lilies to be "considered," the description of a storm at the close of the Sermon on the Mount (note the poetry of it), the Parable of the Sower, His continual out-

door life and love of mountains. He evidently wished us to be reminded of God by all the things around us. When He said "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" He was not merely referring to a future vision of God in another world, but to the way in which He may be seen here and now in everything.

VIII. Great Writers Teach the Same.—In one of Shakespeare's plays a group of noblemen leave the town and court life to live in the open air, and they learn to delight in all the changes of weather and varying moods of the year. Read aloud "As You Like It," ii. 1, first seventeen lines.

The following lines of Wordsworth might be appreciated by an elder class. And although the thought is somewhat beyond children, the lines attract by their music and may remain a possession for later years:

> Nature never did betray
> The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege,
> Through all the years of this our life, to lead
> From joy to joy: for she can so inform
> The mind that is within us, so impress
> With quietness and beauty, and so feed
> With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
> Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
> Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
> The dreary intercourse of daily life,
> Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
> Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
> Is full of blessings.

The first eleven verses of Psalm cxxxix. show the same idea as Shakespeare and Wordsworth, only with that wonderful feeling for worship that the Jews seemed to have more than any other nation. Shakespeare sees "*good* in everything," Wordsworth feels that all is "full of *blessings*," but the Psalmist feels *God's hand* holding him, a far more personal idea.

Turning now from poets to a man who was also a great philosopher and man of science, Bacon, we find these remarkable words:

"Thy creatures have been my book, but Thy Word much more. I have sought Thee in the courts, fields, and gardens; I have found Thee in Thy temple."

Yes, Nature says much, but not enough; we need God's Word in a more direct and special sense. As Bacon says, we find God much more in His Word (the Bible) and in His Temple (the Church).

[*Note.*—With a younger class all these quotations might be omitted, and the hymn "There is a book who runs may read" substituted. Some of the verses, such as those on the moon and the dew, will need some explanation, or will give opportunity for the children to express their meaning.]

Ask the class to think over before next lesson the question "Why do we call the Bible God's Word?"

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Write out the verse of Hymn 168 that you like best.
2. What are some of the *outward* signs of reverence that we show in church?
3. Read Acts xiv. 15, 16, 17, and find out to whom the words were said.
4. Learn Ps. cxxxix. 1-11.
5. Learn G. Herbert's "Elixir."
6. Look in the Confirmation Service at the "Gifts of the Spirit" and say what you think the last one means.

Suggestion for Teacher's Study.—Ruskin's "Elements of Drawing" is a very inspiring book on the subject of Nature (Everyman's Library, 1*s.*).

LESSON XXXI

The Bible: God's Word

Introduction.—The class has been asked to think over why we call the Bible God's Word. Any thoughts they may express will serve as an introduction.

I. The Bible Many Books.—Let us first ask ourselves what the Bible is. It is not *a* book, but a collection of books, a library in itself. Let the class open their Bibles at the contents and count the number.

Are they all volumes of sermons? No. Let the class turn over the pages and say what different *kinds* of books they find: History, poetry, prophetic or teaching books, somewhat like sermons; letters; one even is a play (Job). The word "Bible" originally comes from the Greek "biblia" (*books*), but now we have come to regard them as one, and so we speak of *a* Bible.

II. The Bible One Book.—And it is a sensible mistake, because they do form *one* in a peculiar way. It is not a haphazard collection. It does not contain all the books of the ancient Hebrews. The books forming the Old Testament were most carefully selected and preserved and regarded by the nation as Holy Writings (or Scriptures). What is it that marks them off as *holy*? They are all concerned with one subject—*God teaching man what He is like.* This is the purpose running through each book. The earliest kind of writing in every nation is a record of old traditions of heroes, their deeds and travels, and speculations about the origin of the world and man and language, and so on. We do not expect to find scientific teaching in them. But in these early traditions of the Hebrews we do find, what we find in no other nation, wonderful teaching about God

and man and right and wrong—moral teaching. Then again, in the books that deal with the history of the Israelites rather than biographies and legends of heroes (let the class name some: Exodus, Samuel, Kings, &c.), we find the main theme is the religious one, the dealings of God with His chosen people, and the education of them in knowledge of God (*e.g.* Samuel's words, "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams"). When we pass on to the poetical books we find in the Psalms the noblest religious *feelings* ever expressed (*e.g.* xxiii.), in Job some of the deepest religious *thought*, and in the later historical Book of Nehemiah we find a grand example of heroic and patriotic religious *action*. We must never forget that religion is the subject of the Bible, *not* science, and *not* history in the modern sense of relating all facts impartially with no regard to their moral importance.

III. Origin of the Bible.—Where did these books come from? We know very little of their origin. In what language were they first written? Generally the Old Testament in Hebrew and the New Testament nearly all in Greek. (Show some specimens of Hebrew writing and a Greek Testament.) Most of the Old Testament books are anonymous. (Explain this word.) When we see one called "a book of Moses" (let the class notice the first five titles), it does not mean that Moses wrote it, but that Moses is the dominating figure in the story, or that it was formerly supposed to have been collected in his time. The word "collected" is a better term than "written," because it is evident that the early books are not the work of any one man but are collected from several sources. (Let the class conjecture how this would be discovered—by differences in style, repetitions of the same events, slight disagreements in details, and so on.)

We do not know then much of the authors of these books, nor indeed do we know exactly *when* they were put together, but it is clear that they were gathered into

a collection of sacred Scriptures hundreds of years before Christ. They were divided into three great groups called (1) the *Law* (the first five books), (2) the *Prophets* (Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve minor prophets), (3) the *Psalms* and other poetical books, with Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles. (Put these on the board.) These books formed the "Canon." This word is Greek and means a measuring rod or a test of measurement, and then afterwards it came to mean the thing measured or *tested.* So the Canonical books of the Bible are those tested and considered worthy to be called sacred. Other books, and religious ones, were rejected. Show the class a copy of the Apocrypha. There are also books of New Testament times that are not admitted into the Canon, Apocryphal Gospels and others.

IV. The Jews' Reverence for the Bible.—After the return from the captivity the Jews took great precautions for the preservation and the study of their holy books. In Our Lord's time we find scribes and lawyers whose business it was to write out and teach and explain them. ("Scribe" means a writer.)

Synagogues were built mainly for the purpose of publicly reading and expounding them. Our Lord used to "read the lessons" at home in Nazareth (St. Luke iv. 16). St. Paul was asked to explain them when he was travelling in Asia Minor (Acts xiii. 15).

It is clear, then, that the Jews, as a nation, treated these books, which we now venerate so highly, with the best and truest reverence of *study.* Still more important is the fact that Our Lord treated them with reverence, that even when a boy He studied them and quoted them often. Let the class recall any of His references to the Old Testament, such as at His temptation, in reproving the Sadducees (St. Matt. xxii. 31). Two out of the seven words from the Cross are from the Psalms. His words in St. Luke xxiv. 44 appear to refer to the threefold division mentioned just now.

V. Inspiration.—We can now return to our first question, why do we regard the Bible as God's Word?

Sometimes we say it is "inspired." (Perhaps one of the class has already used this word; if so, let the teacher say that it will be considered presently.) People have had very different notions of the meaning of this word. Some people have believed in verbal inspiration—that is, that God guided and ordered every word, and therefore that nothing in the Bible can be incorrect. This notion has led to a great deal of distress and even to unbelief. Look at such a verse as Ps. xciii. 1. One might as well be troubled by the phrase "the sun rose," which of course is scientifically inaccurate.

It is perhaps nearer the truth to look upon Israel *as a nation* as having been inspired by God, because the utterances of great men cannot be effective unless there are willing ears to pay attention; thus the people of Israel were inspired to listen to Moses and Elijah, as well as these prophets were inspired to speak.

[*Note.*—Such passages as Jer. vii. 26, in apparent contradiction to this, refer to the condition of the people when they had fallen into gross sin, and lapsed from their ideals.]

Let us think, then, of the whole nation as being inspired, or trained, by God: led down to Egypt for one kind of education, led through the wilderness for another, led into the Holy Land for another, led to value certain traditions and writings more than others, and all along, of course, by means of their great men, led to express the great truths of religion, as far as man was able to understand them.

VI. God Speaks to Man through Men.—Now the great point to bear in mind is this: that all along God has chosen to reveal Himself *through man*, using just the material that man can understand, at first childlike legends, then biographies, histories, poems, and so on, until the time was ripe for the great revelation: God's Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. Still He spoke through Man—the Son of Man.

Has God's word ceased? Has inspiration come to an end? No; as it went on continuously in the history of Israel, so it goes on continuously in the life of the Church.

No doubt God inspires men who are not of the Church, as He inspired men who were not Israelites of old; but we can feel that the least of us in the Kingdom of God is inspired, if not to utter great thoughts, at least to listen to them. Quote the words of the Prayer for the Church Militant, "beseeching Thee to inspire continually the universal Church," &c.

What Inspiration is, then, it is difficult to define, but easy to understand, and the more thoroughly we study the Bible, the better we shall understand it. As it has been expressed, the more we study the Bible like any other book, the more we shall find that it is *unlike* any other book, and that the Catechism and Communion Service are justified in saying "*God spake* these words and said"; "The same which *God spake* in the twentieth chapter of Exodus." (Let the class turn to these passages.)

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Learn the Collect for the Second Sunday in Advent. How does it emphasise *our* part in inspiration? What is the *chief* teaching of the Bible emphasised by it?

2. Find as many places as you can where Our Lord quotes the Old Testament.

3. How is the Bible honoured by the English Church?

4. Draw the lectern in your own church: or describe it in words, and any others you have seen.

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—National Society's Tracts on Religious Education, No. 9: "The Modern Teacher and the Book of Genesis"; "The Old Testament and its Contents," by James Robertson (Black, 6*d.*). Think over any books you consider inspired since Bible times (*e.g.* "Pilgrim's Progress"; "Imitation of Christ"; Herbert's Poems; "Christian Year"). Any such might be named to the class.

LESSON XXXII

The Lord's Day

Introduction.—Let the class open their books at the "duty towards God" and notice the last clause. In the words "serve Him truly all the days of my life" the writer of the Catechism has summed up, in a remarkable and grand way, the Fourth Commandment, with its injunctions to labour for six days and rest on the seventh. It is specially this seventh day and how we are to keep it that I want you to think about to-day. What names have you heard given to this seventh day of rest? "Sabbath," "Sunday," "the Lord's Day" are all different words with quite different meanings. Let us begin with the name "Sabbath," which is a Hebrew word for rest.

I. Origin of the Sabbath.—It is always well, before discussing the value of a custom, to inquire into the story of how it began and how people in the past have regarded it. Where do we first hear of the Sabbath?

Although the Sabbath is mentioned as early as Gen. ii. 3 (let the class turn to this), we do not hear of it as a rest-day for man till the time of Moses. Remind the class of the familiar story of the gathering of manna, and the regulations about gathering a double quantity on Friday to last over the Sabbath (Ex. xvi). This reads as though keeping the Sabbath were no new idea being insisted on for the first time. A little later we have the Fourth Commandment, placing Sabbath-keeping in the forefront of duty, and beginning with the peculiar word "Remember." It has been supposed

that the Sabbath had been kept from very early times, as far back as the days of Abraham's ancestors away in Mesopotamia; but that it had fallen into disuse during the long time in Egypt—in fact, slavery would have made it impossible there.

II. How the Jews Kept it.—The Jewish law required that the Sabbath should be kept strictly. The instance in Num. xv. 32-36 is enough to show this. For a man to be stoned for gathering sticks on the Sabbath seems terrible; but it was probably a case of getting the wood for *business* and *gain* rather than for his personal needs; and any pursuit of business was specially held to desecrate the Sabbath. In Jeremiah's time the day had been habitually profaned by people carrying burdens about for their business (Jer. xvii. 21-27). The Jews evidently neglected the observance of the Sabbath before the Captivity (2 Chron. xxxvi. 21). On their return to the Holy Land, when the nation made a fresh start, as it were, under Nehemiah, the keeping of the Sabbath was rigorously enforced (Neh. xiii. 15-22). As time went on, and the Jews became dependent on one heathen nation after another (Persians, Greeks, Romans), their regard for the Sabbath became more intense. It was an outward thing that distinguished them from all other nations, and they clung to it with intensity. On one occasion a thousand Jews refused to defend themselves in war on the Sabbath, and were all massacred (1 Macc. ii. 32-38).

III. How the Jews Added to its Observance.—So intense was their regard for the Sabbath that they carried its observance to extreme lengths. When we come to New Testament times we find the Sabbath hedged round with innumerable little rules, which were supposed to carry out very carefully the larger rules of early days. For instance, not only were you not to kill an animal for food, but you might not kill an insect. Not only must you not cut up wood for fuel, but you must not go up a tree lest a twig should break. Not only must a burden not be carried, but a nailed shoe must not be worn. Not only must a long journey not be undertaken, but the exact length of a

Sabbath day's journey was fixed (a little over half a mile). Not only must a fire not be made for cooking, but a lamp must not be lighted. It is recorded of one man that he avoided "all manner of work" by remaining the whole of the Sabbath in the position in which he happened to be when it began.

IV. How Christ Treated the Sabbath.—Ask the class to recall any occasions on which Our Lord angered the Pharisees by neglect of these absurd rules. The following passages should be well known to the teacher, and the substance of them briefly obtained from the class or told (St. Mark ii. 23-28, iii. 1-6, N.B. verse 6; St. Luke vi. 11, xiii. 10-16; St. John vii. 19-23, v. 8-11, 18). Plucking corn and rubbing it in the hands to remove the husk were actions held to be violations of the law against reaping and threshing on the Sabbath. The man who lifted his bed (not much more than a mat) was violating the law against carrying burdens.

V. How Christ Saved the Day of Rest.—Lead the class to see that these burdensome rules about the Sabbath would have destroyed it in time. What is called "reaction" would have set in; people would be disgusted and go to the other extreme. Our Lord, however, placed the question of the Sabbath on one sure principle instead of on rules: "The Sabbath was made for man." These words we must always bear in mind.

By thus sweeping away the foolish rules that were choking the Sabbath Our Lord *really* kept a Day of Rest for man for all time, while the Pharisees were seeking to kill Him for breaking it.

An elder class may be interested to know that at the time of the French Revolution, when the Government tried to abolish Christianity, the observance of the Lord's Day was done away with. But after a while it was found that a day of rest was necessary for health, quite apart from any religious idea, and every *tenth* day was then set apart for the purpose. Again this was found insufficient, and the seventh day was restored.

VI. The Jewish Sabbath a Day of Joy.—It is important to notice that the Sabbath was never in any sense a day of gloom or self-denial. The Jews were commanded to rejoice on it (Isa. lviii. 13). It was a common day for hospitality and social gatherings (though hot dishes were not allowed). Perhaps the class can recall an occasion when Our Lord was invited to dinner on the Sabbath. And this not to a publican's house, but to a Pharisee's (St. Luke xiv.).

VII. The Early Church and the Sabbath.—Turning our thoughts to our own times we find a strange fact. We keep our weekly rest on the first, instead of the seventh, day. How is this? Give the class ample time to think, say what they know, or feel their want of knowledge. Can they remember anything said in the New Testament about this day being kept sacred? Probably not. Did Christ ordain it? It is not recorded so. Did the Apostles? Again it is not recorded that they did. Turn to our familiar Acts ii. and notice verse 46. All days are alike God's, or the Lord's, days.

Let us think once again (as in the lesson before last) how the Christian *ideal* of life is God in everything; no distinction between sacred and profane study; no place more sacred than another (St. John iv. 21-23); nor any day (Gal. iv. 9, 10, 11).

There is no doubt that the earliest Christians, being all Jews, kept their own Sabbath as they had always been accustomed to do from childhood, but Gentile converts were in no sense bound by it, and it never became a Christian institution.

VIII. Origin of the Lord's Day.—Lead the class to see that the meetings every day to "break bread" in one place soon became impossible as the Church increased in numbers, and periodical meetings would have to take their place. Once a week would be the natural occasion to choose. What day was associated with their most intense religious joy? The day on which Christ rose from the dead was the one on which all would desire to *meet* for worship. The centre of their worship was the Lord's Supper, and the day came to be

called the Lord's Day. We do not know when this *weekly* custom began, but we find it referred to in Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 2; and Rev. i. 10, as if it were already a well-known thing.

IX. Sunday.—Now let us look at the other name—Sunday. Ask the class to suggest the reason for this name. Perhaps some will have connected it with the creation of light on the first day (an idea conveyed by many hymns). Others may conclude, rightly, that it is a *heathen* name. Now how came it about that the Lord's Day is almost universally known by a heathen name? We must go back to the days of the first Christian Emperor. (The class ought to be able to give his name and his date also, roughly, from the lesson on the Creed.) Constantine ruled over a great empire —many of his subjects were Christians, but many were heathen; he himself was hardly free, perhaps, from the religious ideas of his childhood. He wished to honour the Lord's Day; he did not wish to dishonour the heathen "day of the Sun." Here are the opening words of his decree: "On the venerable day of the Sun let the magistrates and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed." For the first time (A.D. 321) the Lord's Day is made a public holy day, holiday, and day of rest. The heathen had been accustomed to have various holidays; the Christians always had their special day of worship. Constantine, by ordering one day every week for all, avoided confusion and offended no one. The heathen word has become the common one in England and in Germany. But the far better name, the Lord's Day, is used in France, Spain, and Italy.

[*Note.*—The Latin for the Lord's Day—*dies dominica*—becomes, in French, Italian, and Spanish, *dimanche, domenica, domingo,* respectively.]

X. The Puritans and the Lord's Day.—There is one more glimpse of history that we must take before we can understand the observance of Sunday. Draw *shortly* from the class, by reference to former lessons, who the Puritans were, what a strong force they were in the

time of the Stuarts, and how they based all their guidance in religion on the words of the Bible, regardless of the long customs and authority of the Church. These Puritans could find practically nothing in the Bible about Sunday (as you are now aware). They then made the great mistake of regarding the Jewish Sabbath as *the same thing* as the Lord's Day. Not only did they assert that no work was to be done, but they also objected to any form of recreation, and turned it for many into a dismal instead of a happy day. Their influence, in this respect, has been most unhappy, although well-intentioned. Not only did it take much of the happiness from the day, but it produced a most disastrous reaction—many people have gone to the other extreme and given up the day entirely to worldliness.

XI. How Should we Keep Sunday?—Give the class time to express themselves fully in this matter; perhaps it would be easier for them to write down their ideas. If the time is short, the discussion should not be hurried, but have another lesson devoted to it.

According to the ideal of the Christian Church from the very first, the Lord's Day is a day of *Worship*. The exact amount of time devoted to worship, the number of services we attend, is left to our conscience and our opportunities. But we must always remember that the earliest disciples met "to break bread," and that throughout the ages *the* service of the Church has been the Eucharist. We shall speak a great deal more about this service in later lessons. Meanwhile let us remember that the Commandments have widened from "thou shalt not" into "thou shalt." Let us rather think of what we ought to do on Sunday than of what we must not do. "Common worship, rather than private sloth, is the duty of those who belong to the body of Christ and are members one of another."

The other great principle in Sunday observance is *Rest*. Our Lord said that the Sabbath was made for man. Man needs it. We saw how it was proved so after the French Revolution. We saw how the heathen made holidays. We know it in our own lives. But rest

does not always mean doing nothing at all. A man who is sitting all the week is best rested by physical exercise on Sunday. Get the class to give illustrations, and lead them to see that we must not judge others in this matter. One thing, however, we must all try to avoid—doing such things as shall hinder others from their opportunity for worship. The teacher should lead the class to try to think seriously on the matter, and to judge for themselves on principle and not from the customs of those around them. It may be pointed out also that we should not unnecessarily shock or offend others, as this would be breaking the highest Christian duty.

XII. The Catechism and Sunday.—Let the lesson close by returning to the words "serve Him truly all the days of my life." In 1661 the Puritans wanted to insert the words "particularly on the Lord's Day," but the Bishops refused to change it. You will now see how grand the ideal of the Catechism is; it is nothing short of the "daily" in Acts ii. 46, and the "Day by day we magnify Thee" of the "Te Deum."

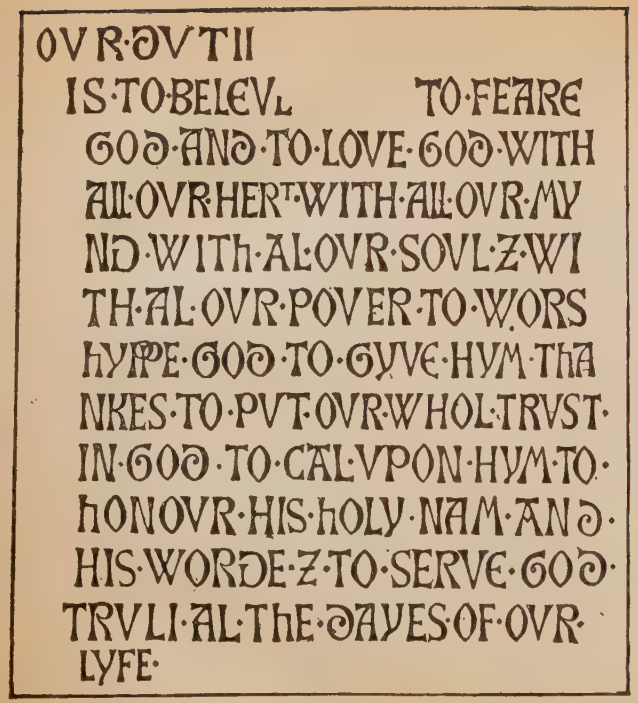
ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Read the passages in the Gospels in which Our Lord is accused of breaking the Sabbath.
2. Learn the first three verses of Keble's "Hymn for Easter Day" in the "Christian Year."
3. Look at Hymn 36 (A. & M.) and explain the words "triple light."
4. Read G. Herbert's "Sunday," and write out the verse you like best.

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—Gamble's "Sunday and the Sabbath" gives a useful survey of the whole question.

Farrar's "Life of Christ," chaps. xxvii., xxxi., xliv.

"The Life of Christ," by Rev. F. M. Blakiston (National Society), pages 137 ff.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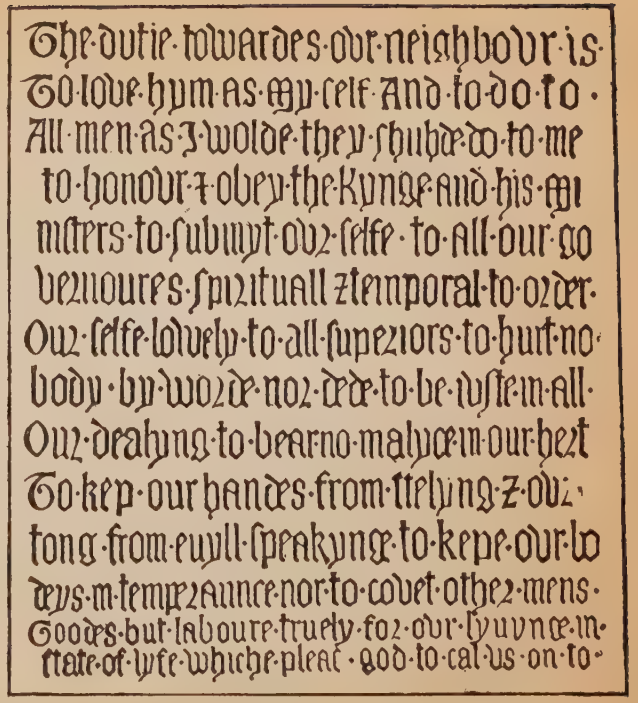
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TABLETS FROM THE BISHOP'S PALACE, ELY, on which are engraved "Our Duty towards God" and 'Our Duty towards Our Neighbour."

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LESSON XXXIII

The New Commandment

Introduction.—We now come to our Duty towards Man. Again the Catechism states first the great law, and then proceeds to show us different views of it and how it is to be carried out in detail. So for the next few lessons we will consider, one by one, some of the leading principles of conduct suggested there.

I. The New Commandment.—Read carefully to the class St. John xiii. 34, 35. Notice that Our Lord speaks of his commandment as *new*. Remind the class how Our Lord widened the meaning of the *old* commandments of the Jewish law. (See Lesson XXVIII.). In His view, the commandment "Thou shalt not kill" forbade not only murder, but even the angry thought. He taught His followers to look upon the old commandments from quite a new point of view. But He did more than this: He gave them a commandment the fulfilling of which would be a fulfilling of the whole law—"Love is the fulfilling of the law." Some of the Jews had already realised this. Remind the scholars of the lawyer's answer—St. Luke x. 42—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God . . . and thy neighbour as thyself." It seems, then, as if this Commandment of Love was not a *new* commandment. Invite the scholars to discuss this and lead them to notice the phrase in the "commandment" which makes it different from any commandment ever given before—"Love one another *as I have loved you.*" We know that no one before ever loved as did Our Lord. He has shown us the meaning of love—His whole life was a picture of the love of God. When we think of that life—when we remember how Our Lord continually

thought and laboured for others—cared for each and for all—body and soul—then we begin to see how great this new commandment is. What a large demand it makes upon us. We have not only not to hate others, but we are actively to love them—to be ready to serve them—nay, more, to be anxious to do so. Very likely we feel as if we cannot do this towards such and such a person with whom, as we say, we do not get on." Perhaps not all at once; but the more we read of Christ's life and words, and the more we try to understand His way of looking at things, the more we shall grow like Him, till at last we shall learn to love as He loved.

III. Who is My Neighbour?—Whom are we to love? Our neighbour. Just like the lawyer in Our Lord's time, however, we are still inclined to ask "Who is my neighbour?" The word certainly has not such a wide meaning as mankind in general. A love for mankind in general would be very vague and meaningless for people like ourselves with our limited understanding. But we are called upon to love every one, every individual specimen of mankind that we actually come across *in any way*. (A few illustrations may be suggested here, some from the teacher and some from the class. A fellow-traveller who needs assistance; a cripple for whom we make room on the pavement; a shy schoolfellow to whom we say a kind word, etc.)

IV. The Good Samaritan.—Let us now look for a moment at Our Lord's answer to the lawyer's question. (Assume that the class is familiar with the story.) There is something much more in this parable than meets the eye of the modern reader at first. If one of us to-day were to come across a person in distress, and take care of him, we should meet with nothing but praise and approval from all. Now the Samaritan who spoke to a Jew, let alone touched and befriended him, incurred displeasure among all his friends, or, still worse, ridicule. So, then, to get a parallel case in modern times we must picture ourselves acting kindly when people who know of it will either disapprove or laugh at us. For instance, it often requires the moral courage of the Good Samaritan

for a boy to take the part of a schoolfellow who is unpopular, perhaps because he is awkward in manner or speech, or deficient in brain, or, in some way, personally unattractive.

V. Loving our Enemies.—Now we come to the most difficult "neighbour" of all, our enemy. Our Lord's directions on this point seem to us, at first, very strange. Read St. Matt. v. 38-48. People have found these words so perplexing that they have tried to explain them away, supposing that Our Lord did not really mean them, was speaking poetically, and so on. But before we decide on any such conclusion, it would be well to try His method in its literal sense. Imagine a boy striking a schoolfellow on the cheek in anger; the second boy, instead of striking back, offers the other cheek. Surely nine out of ten boys will feel a shock of surprise and will not strike again—the quarrel will be over.

If it takes two to make a quarrel, one can end it.

Sometimes we can end a little ill-feeling that has arisen by asking a favour of the other person: it means swallowing our pride, but it generally succeeds. There is a story of a woman who made an enemy, and tried to make friends again with no success. She spoke kindly to him, but he would not listen; she talked kindly of him to others, but he would not believe; she put gifts for him at his door, but he refused to accept them. One day her child was taken ill, and she ran to him for help, and before she had finished speaking he was her friend. (From Barrow's "Fireside Fables.")

VI. A High Ideal.—You will think this is a very high ideal of conduct. Yes, Our Lord thought so too, he wished us to aim at nothing short of the highest and best. Look again at the last verse of the chapter (St. Matt. v. 48). The higher our ideal, the better our actions will be, as Herbert says:

> Who aimeth at the sky,
> Shoots higher much than he that means a tree.

The only danger to beware of is to listen to these

words of Christ, approve of them, and *do* them not. The closing words of His sermon show how He felt that this would be the case; open opposition to the line of conduct He lays down is not so deadly in its effect as the attitude of people who hear and approve but make no attempt to act. (Read aloud, slowly, St. Matt. vii. 24-27.)

VII. The Risk.—If the class are encouraged to express their opinions, they will probably suggest that if you act in this way, a bully or an unprincipled cheat will have everything his own way. There is no answer to this; it is quite possible. But if there were no risk, the ideal would cease to be high. If you love them that love you, what reward have you? Christianity is a great venture, as the poet Browning says, "It is very hard to be a Christian." But think a minute. Suppose ten boys in a school acted like this, what a difference it would make to the tone of the whole! Suppose a score of people in a parish, or a thousand in a country, what a steady influence they would have over the whole! The few disciples of Jesus seemed a drop in the ocean in the early days of Christianity. Now look around at some of the results: you cannot enter any town without seeing some of the fruits of Christ's new commandment: hospitals, almshouses, institutions for the blind, schools for feeble-minded, homes for waifs and strays, orphanages, and so on. These were totally unknown in this *organised* way before Christianity.

VIII. War.—The class may ask whether war is ever right. The teacher may suggest that there is such a thing as righteous anger (exhibited by Our Lord against the Pharisees, for instance). Force may be right when a boy delivers a smaller boy from a bully, or when a war is waged for a righteous cause. Now may we not hope that war may cease? If every one acted to his private enemy according to Christ's rule, the whole nation would soon act to its public enemy in the same way. We have got to the length of treating prisoners of war as we ourselves would be treated, and of tending in our field-hospitals *all* wounded men, enemies or friends, alike.

IX. The Meek shall Inherit the Earth.—Ask the class what they think this means. Our Lord's words as a rule do not refer to a future life, even when He speaks of a reward in heaven. Most of His words seem to refer to *here* and *now*. At first sight, the idea of the meek inheriting the earth seems quite the reverse of actual facts. At one period in the history of the earth brute force inherited it. Gradually, as intelligence developed, and man was able to subdue the stronger animals and to use the forces of Nature for his convenience, brain-power inherited the earth. Perhaps it does still to a great extent, but very gradually the *power* and *force* of gentleness and love are gaining ground. Greed and cunning are seen in their true colours, and though they succeed for a season, unselfishness and consideration for others, or meekness in its best sense, will triumph and inherit the earth. (Livingstone or Gordon, going *unarmed* among alien tribes, may be given as illustrations; or the story of Oberlin.)

[*Note.*—The teacher should impress on the boys and girls that they are not merely individuals, without relation to one another; every opportunity should be seized in these lessons to bring home to their minds that they are links in a great chain that has endured from the beginning and will run on for ever—that a chain can never be stronger than its weakest link—that this weakest link may mean *them*. Anyone may feel careless about his personal ill-conduct if it only involves himself in loss and ruin, but he will hesitate if he can be made to realise that this ill-conduct will keep all progress back and block the way of the Kingdom of God.]

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Read 1 Cor. xiii.; write out verses 4-7.
2. Learn St. John xiii. 34, 35.
3. Write out the clause of the Litany in which we pray to be delivered from war.
4. Print or illuminate the first clause of My Duty towards my Neighbour, down to "unto me."
5. Read Rom. xii. 17-21.

6. Write a short story (remembered or invented) to illustrate this lesson.

7. What do you think Wordsworth meant by the lines:

> That best portion of a good man's life—
> His little, nameless, unremembered acts
> Of kindness and of love

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—"Tales from Tolstoi" (6*d.*), "Where Love is, there God is also" (this might be read by or to the class); "What Men Live By" (this might be told shortly as a separate lesson). Parts of "Ivan the Fool" (in "More Tales from Tolstoi") might also be told or adapted. For the story of Oberlin see "The Way of Worship" (Lee).

LESSON XXXIV

Ordering Myself Lowly

Introduction.—Let the class open their books at the "duty towards my neighbour" and notice the words "honour," "honour and obey," "submit," "order myself lowly." See how large a proportion of one's duty appears to be submission to others. The Bible bears out the same idea—humility is highly valued in the Old Testament writings, and becomes one of the leading Christian virtues in the New. But it has been greatly misunderstood. To-day we will discuss what it means and why it is so important.

I. Mistaken Idea about Humility.—We had better first clear our minds of a common mistake about humility. To many of you it no doubt seems an anything but attractive virtue, at best a disagreeable necessity. (Let the class express their opinions on what they consider a humble person to be—probably a poor-spirited, lifeless kind of character, who thinks himself unfit and unworthy and unable for anything.)

The essence of humility is not so much having a low estimate of ourselves as to turn our minds away from ourselves, to "throw ourselves" into other people and other things. Instead of a morbid self-inspection, humility is a continual attitude of *looking up*. We are not only to love our fellow-man, and do all we can for him, but we have also to respect, honour, and look up to him.

II. Who are my Betters?—Question from the class, or tell briefly, a few words about the French Revolution; how the people killed their king and most of the nobles, abolished all titles, addressed each other as "citizen,"

and attempted to start afresh—taking as their motto the three words, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. Are all men equal? Let the class discuss. It is far nearer the truth to say, although it sounds like a self-contradiction, that we all of us have "betters." There are several different ways in which one man can be better than another. (Get the following from the class if possible.)

1. People *older* than ourselves are our betters, from the mere fact of their greater experience of life. They may not have used their experience wisely, but in any case their advice and help should be sought, and attended to.

2. People who are placed over us *officially*—that is, for some special purpose. The Catechism names "governors, teachers, spiritual pastors, and masters." (Let the class illustrate these fully from their own circumstances; some are probably still at school, and can mention their teachers; others may be working for their living, and can mention their masters; while the clergyman is common to all.) Sometimes we do not approve in *every* respect of those put over us, but if we remember that we are called upon to submit to them in their *official* capacity, we can do so more heartily. You must never suppose that teachers set themselves up to be better than their pupils in all directions; far from it; they are placed in the position of teacher because they know a particular subject better than the class does, and can therefore lead and inform them. On other subjects, and in other directions, the pupils are often "better" than their teacher.

3. Lastly, there are the people around us who are better than ourselves in any way. Let the class suggest various ways—in knowledge, in skill of hand, in physical strength, in artistic taste, and especially in goodness.

III. All Men have Betters.—It follows that one man may be better than another in one respect, and inferior to him in another. For instance, an old man may attend a lecture given by a young man; a clergyman goes to a doctor for advice and orders himself lowly and reverently to him, and the doctor listens to the clergy-

man's sermons in the same spirit; so that it is really not a contradiction to say that we *all* have betters, before whom it is our duty to order ourselves lowly and reverently. We may go even further and assert that everyone we meet is probably our better in something.

A famous instance of humility in this sense is afforded by Outram. When Lucknow was being besieged during the Indian Mutiny, Havelock had been long struggling against terrible difficulties to relieve it, until he and his men were nearly exhausted in the attempt. Outram, with fresh troops, was sent to take command of the relieving force. When he arrived at Cawnpore and found the state Havelock was in, and saw what a gallant struggle he had made, Outram waived his own right to the command, insisted on Havelock leading the renewed forces and having the glory of relieving Lucknow, while he himself served *under* him as a volunteer.

IV. The Humble Man Seeks his Betters.—The truly humble-minded man is he who is always on the look-out for this something in which his neighbour betters him, and endeavours to learn from him. Nothing is easier than to pick holes in our neighbour, and find out his weak points; anyone can do that. It is said to be the mark of a *young* critic to find faults in a picture, or book, or piece of music, whereas appreciation of good points is the mark of a more experienced critic, who has learned to understand the value of extracting all the best he can and calling attention to *that*.

The more we learn to reverence others the faster our education proceeds. We can almost measure our advance in any subject by our increased wonder and admiration; the more you know, the more there seems to stretch out beyond.

Read the following quotations:—

"Try to frequent the company of your betters. In books and in life that is the most wholesome society; learn to admire rightly; the great pleasure of life is that. Note what great men admired; they admired great things; narrow spirits admire basely, and worship meanly." (Thackeray.)

"The youth who does not look up will look down; and the spirit that does not soar is destined perhaps to grovel." (Disraeli.)

"Exactly in the degree in which you can find creatures greater than yourself to look up to, in that degree you are ennobled yourself, and in that degree happy." (Ruskin.)

V. The Greatest Men are the Humblest.—We must not imagine, then, that the Catechism is speaking only of the duty of humility in *children*. In reading the lives of great men you will be struck again and again by their humbleness of mind and simplicity, and their readiness to learn from all.

Sir Isaac Newton, after a life devoted to discovery in the laws of astronomy, said that he had only been gathering pebbles on the shore of the vast ocean of truth. Shakespeare says that the difference between a wise man and a fool is this: whereas a fool thinks himself wise, the wise man knows himself to be a fool. Socrates used to say that he only knew one thing, and that was that he knew nothing.

If this is the case in intellectual work it is still more so in spiritual life. Our Christian religion is based on the worship and admiration of a Person. The more we understand about Christ, the more there is to understand; and it is this continual looking up towards the ideal life that inspires us and makes us humble.

VI. How Christ Taught Humility.—Ask the class if they have noticed how Christ appealed to the *eyes* of His disciples when He wished to impress an important truth. Can they remember any of His object-lessons on humility? The following will probably be given by the class:—

1. One day Christ heard His disciples on their walk disputing as to which should be the greatest among them. He said nothing at the time, when their minds were heated on the matter, did not tell them *not* to dispute, but waited till they had come to the house, and then took a little child and set him in the midst, and pointed out for them, and for us for ever, the peculiar loveliness of a

child. Unless we become as little children we cannot enter the kingdom of God. A little child is always asking questions, always wanting help, absolutely trustful, and looks up naturally to all around him. Great men of science have said the same thing about the kingdom of Nature. Whoever would study Nature must become as a little child, humble-minded and willing to learn from *everything*.

2. At the Last Supper Our Lord used another object-lesson. The same dispute arose; again He was silent, and then later on He girded Himself and washed their feet, one by one. No words could have made so deep an impression as this.

3. The parable of the Pharisee and the Publican is a vivid word-picture showing us another side of humility.

4. Our Lord's greatest object-lesson in humility was His own life on earth. The teacher would do well to close the lesson with this thought, making no comment on or elaboration of it.

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Read St. Luke xiv. 7-11.
2. Write out either Micah vi. 8 or Isa. lvii. 15.
3. Read the Collect for Advent Sunday and in connection with it Phil. ii. 5-11.
4. Find a verse in the "Benedicite" that bears on this lesson; name some people in illustration of it, such as St. Elizabeth and her son St. John the Baptist.
5. What do you understand by the closing words of St. Mark x. 14?

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—Ruskin's "Crown of Wild Olive," § 137; also the closing paragraphs of the chapter on "Work" may be helpful in suggesting an answer to Exercise 5 above.

LESSON XXXV

Loyalty

Introduction.—Revise briefly the various kinds of people who are our "betters." Among these there are some to whom we owe more than reverence—obedience. This is the part of our duty we will consider to-day, for although we must honour all our betters, we are not called upon to *obey* them all. Now, why should we obey any one? Why should we not be perfectly free?

I. Mistaken Idea about Liberty.—Remind the class of the three principles of the French Revolution—"Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity." We saw last time that it is not true to speak of all men as *equal*. Now let us examine the principle of liberty and see in what sense all men are *free*. (Let the class express their ideas on the subject of freedom; some will probably consider it as "doing what you like," "not being compelled by laws," "not being interfered with," "not being under rules.") England is always called a free country. Do *you* do what you like? Are *you* exempt from any laws? Are *you* never interfered with? Or do you imagine the French or the Americans to be free in this sense? Or do you think of obedience as a *childish* virtue—a natural thing for *young* people—but that when you are grown up you will be free? No! One might almost say it was the other way about, and that the older you grow the more you have to obey—the less free you become. This may appear strange, but let us examine it more closely.

II. No One is Free.—Every person you meet is under command. Were you and I free to come, or not to come, to this class to-day? Of the two, *you* were more free, if anything, than I. You were bound to come because I expected you, but I was bound because you

[six] expected me, and so I was, as it were, six times less free; I was six times more bound to come.

Is a shopkeeper free to serve his customers or not? If he does not serve them promptly he will soon fail in business. Does any child obey a command more than a doctor *obeys* when he is called out to a patient in the night? The higher we go the less free do we find people. What title do we give to the man who is at the head of the Government, and who wields more power than any other man? The title "Prime Minister" is only another word for chief servant. And as for the King, he is perhaps, if you consider it, less free to do what he likes than any one of his subjects.

Liberty, in the sense of doing what you like, is non-existent. The nearest approach to such freedom perhaps is the life of a tramp.

III. A Free Country.—What, then, is meant by a "free country"? Lead the class to see that when people live together they have to recognise each other's rights. The best laws are those which interfere as little as possible with the action of individual people, so long as the rights and freedom of *others* are not hampered. We take pride in England as a free country quite rightly; an ordinarily well-conducted person is hardly aware of the laws; they do not hamper him. (Contrast with the times when we had no freedom of the Press, or freedom to worship according to our conscience; or with other countries in the present day.) In England now we may say and do and write what we please, so long as we do not injure another; and if any one hurts us or interferes with us, the law will protect us. This is what we mean by a free country, and we should be very thankful for it.

IV. True Liberty.—In the same way the truly free man is he who binds himself willingly, one who obeys, not in a slavish spirit because he is obliged, but with a cheerful readiness. The piece of advice given by his superior officer to the Prince of Wales when he entered the Navy was this: "Do whatever you are told, and do it at the run." This advice is good for any of us to carry

through life. If, then, liberty is in any sense "doing what we like," it is only so in the sense of "liking that which it is our duty to do."

The truth is that we all like law and order, and are happiest when leading a strictly ordered life. Children never really object to a firm teacher—only to one who is *uncertain*, sometimes strict and sometimes not, which is, of course, law*less*, and therefore produces unhappiness. We take a pride in being "under orders" and carrying them out exactly. For instance, Londoners have the character of being very "law-abiding"; it is curious to notice how rapidly you can walk through a crowded London street, because each person obeys the rule of keeping to the right; while sometimes in a country town on a market-day it is almost impossible to get along. Illustrations may also be given from games, in which boys and girls will carry out with zealous care the rules laid down by the captain—or from the Church Lads' Brigade or Boy Scouts. "The Charge of the Light Brigade" may be referred to if the class are likely to know it.

An elder class may appreciate the following lines of George Herbert:

> Slight those who say amidst their sickly healths,
> "Thou liv'st by rule." What doth not so, but man?
> Houses are built by rule, and common-wealths.
> Entice the trusty sun, if that you can,
> From his ecliptic line: beckon the sky.
> Who lives by rule, then, keeps good company.

V. Loyalty.—We have a very beautiful word in English for this spirit of glad and energetic obedience; we call it "loyalty," which really means a love of law, and we can hardly give a warmer word of praise to any one than to say that he is a "loyal" friend or a "loyal" servant. The Catechism points out the various directions in which our loyalty is demanded. Let us look at them one by one.

VI. Loyalty to Our Home.—It is naturally in our home that we first learn obedience. We are to love, honour, and succour our father and mother. The curious word "succour" means originally "to run up

to help any one from below." This is a kind of word-picture of our duty to our parents. It does not mean only that we are to support them when they are aged and unable to support themselves, but also that we are to help them all along the way. We can help them every day by showing a general *desire* to help, by amusing or helping the younger children, by doing a little piece of work in the house or the garden, by putting our clothes neatly away, and so on. Even still more we can help them by taking a pride in our home, by thinking it the best in the world, by coming in joyfully, by showing pleasure in the meals provided, and being affectionate in our manner.

VII. Loyalty to Our School.—After our home the next "little world in itself" we enter is usually our school. Our loyalty can be shown there more easily perhaps than anywhere else; the work is all done entirely for the children—the rules are all made for their direct benefit. The occasion when they can best show their loyalty is in obeying rules the reason for which they do not understand; or in carrying out rules when there is no one overlooking them; or in obeying with special care a *young* master or monitor.

VIII. Loyalty to King and Country.—Ask the class what is meant by the words "all that are put in authority under him." (Judges, magistrates, and police officers may be instanced.) We obey the King loyally when we obey the laws, however disagreeable to us personally; and cheerfully carry out any regulations, although perhaps tiresome, that are made for the health or convenience of the people around us. (The teacher can instance the use of receptacles for waste-paper in a public park, attending to requests to shut gates and keep to the paths; observing lighting-up time when bicycling; abstaining from fishing in illegal ways. Perhaps further illustrations can be obtained from the class.)

IX. Loyalty to Our Masters.—This word is intended to include all people who are over us in our work after schooldays, when we are earning our own living. It is here, perhaps, that loyalty will be occasionally difficult; some time or other in our lives, no doubt, we shall have

grievances against those over us. The way to be loyal is to be straightforward and outspoken, so that the grievance may very likely be remedied. If the people over us appear unworthy of our respect, it may still be our duty to obey them, and nothing will help us in this so much as St. Paul's advice: "Be obedient to them that are your masters in singleness of your heart as unto Christ; not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but with good will, doing service *as to the Lord* and not to men."

X. Loyalty to Our Church.—In what sense can we obey our "spiritual pastors"? (The class will probably suggest "listening to sermons.") We can be loyal in our adherence to the church we attend; go to it regularly, instead of wandering unnecessarily to other churches; speak warmly of it to other people; never complain of anything about it to outsiders. We can try to influence others to come to church or Sunday school. We can try to be loyal members of the Church as a whole. Mr. Gladstone made a rule of never criticising a sermon, because the clergyman spoke to him in God's name.

XI. Christ's Obedience.—As usual, we turn for the closing thought on the subject to Our Lord. Get the class to contribute any passages that speak of His obedience (such as St. Luke ii. 51; St. Matt. iii. 15; Phil. ii. 8). There is a picture by Holman Hunt of Christ when young, at the age of twenty perhaps. The expression on the face is solemn and yet joyful. He is standing on the hillside above Nazareth, with woods and streams and meadows stretching away in the distance. In His hands He is clasping a roll of the Old Testament and His eyes are looking up to heaven. Underneath are the words of Ps. xl. 7, 8. "Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, that I should fulfil thy will, O my God: I am content to do it; yea, thy law is within my heart."

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Go over in your mind the story of Joseph, and then say how he showed himself loyal (1) to his father

and home; (2) to his masters; (3) to his king; (4) to his country.

2. Find the Collect in Morning Prayer in which obedience to God is called "perfect freedom." (See 2 Cor. iii. 17.)

3. Learn G. Herbert's "Elixir."

4. Think over any fresh ways in which you can "succour" your father and mother.

5. Read the first prayer for the King in the Communion Service, and notice how it bears on this lesson.

6. Learn the following lines on "Freedom" by Lowell:

> Is true Freedom but to break
> Fetters for our own dear sake,
> And, with leathern hearts, forget
> That we owe mankind a debt?
> No! true freedom is to share
> All the chains our brothers wear,
> And, with heart and hand, to be
> Earnest to make others free!
> They are slaves who fear to speak
> For the fallen and the weak;
> They are slaves who will not choose
> Hatred, scoffing, and abuse,
> Rather than in silence shrink
> From the truth they needs must think;
> They are slaves who dare not be
> In the right with two or three.

7. What do you understand by Our Lord's words in St. Mark x. 44?

LESSON XXXVI

Truth

Introduction.—Ask the class to look at the second half of the Duty to My Neighbour and notice the expressions: "word nor deed"; "true and just"; "my hands . . . and my tongue." These pairs of words all imply the *tongue* and the *hand* as the two great means at our disposal for dealing good or evil to others. We will talk to-day about the tongue, and next time about the hand.

I. Words are Deeds.—Get from the class that a deed is anything we do. What is a word? A word is merely a kind of deed. Let the class experiment with a long word, say, Nebuchadnezzar, and notice the muscular effort required; let them tell how they use the lips, tongue, teeth, and throat in talking.

What, then, is the difference between a word and a deed? Evidently there *is* a difference or the Catechism would not say "word nor deed." (Compare also the Confession in the Communion Service, "By thought, word and deed.")

II. Words are a Special Kind of Deed.—Words are deeds, but they are deeds with a very special *meaning*. Most of the things we do in the day are merely done to satisfy some want; we eat because we are hungry, lie down to rest, take a book to read, and so on. Some of our actions, however, *mean* something to other people. If we shake hands with another it is not to give our hands exercise, but is intended to mean "I feel friendly towards you." Now all our talking is action of this kind; it *means* something. We work the muscles of our tongue and lips not for the sake of exercising them or of making sounds, but in order to express some

meaning, to convey our thoughts to some one else. All deeds intended to convey some meaning are therefore words in this extended sense: for instance, beckoning, pointing, shaking or nodding the head, frowning, smiling, clapping, hissing (these and their meanings can be obtained from the class). To slam a door in a temper and to slam it by accident may be given as an illustration of an action as a word, and an action simple; if possible get a similar illustration from the class.

III. What does Speaking the Truth Mean?—Now it is, of course, our duty that all our words should be true; in short, we must speak the truth. It sounds simple enough, but it is difficult to be quite clear in our minds as to what truth is. What do you mean by telling the truth? (The class will probably say "Telling what is actually the case," "Telling a fact.") No, it is not so simple as that. Suppose I say, "John is in the garden" (believing him to be there); it turns out that he is not in the garden; am I telling a falsehood? No. If I say, "John is in the garden" (believing him not to be there); it turns out that he *is* there; am I telling a falsehood? Yes. Now in the first case I stated what was not a fact, and yet I did not speak falsely; in the second case I stated what *was* a fact, and yet I told a falsehood. (Take another similar illustration, or let the class give one, so as to make this point quite clear.) As far as character is concerned, and our duty, Truth is an agreement (or correspondence) between *what I say* and *what I really believe*.

IV. A Statement of Fact may be an Untruth.—If words are intended to convey our thoughts, words that do *not* convey our thoughts are false. A statement of fact that gives a false *impression* is a lie. It is well to call it by its real name and then it is more likely to be avoided. For instance, in the days of religious persecution a woman went to a meeting of her fellow-worshippers—a meeting which was forbidden by law. She was suspected and asked where she had been. Her answer was, "I have been to hear my father's will

read." She meant the Bible, but she intended her questioner to think she meant her earthly father's will. This answer of hers was a statement of fact, and yet was a lie.

Again, a boy wrote "twelve" on a piece of paper, pinned it inside his cap, and then said to the ticket collector, "I am under twelve." This was a fact, and yet a lie. Again, a statement repeated in a different tone of voice may give a false impression, and therefore be a lie. The evil of such a type of falsehood is this: the person is apt to deceive himself into imagining he is telling the truth. It is often done by people who consider themselves conscientious.

Lead the class to see how particularly mean a lie is when the person who tells it hugs the idea that he is speaking the truth. A thoughtful class may also be led to see that people who continually tell such falsehoods may at last *lose their sense of right and wrong*, which is the worst punishment we can imagine. Yes, they think they are truthful. But what about those terrible words of Christ, "Verily I say unto you, they have their reward"?

V. The Evil of Falsehood.—We all have a peculiar horror of a lie; we can hardly offer a greater insult to any one than to accuse him of such a thing. Why is this? Language is peculiar to man; it is his great means of passing on his thoughts and so increasing the wisdom of the ages; it is his great means of understanding and sympathising with his fellows; it is a wonderful bond between all members of the human race. To use this language falsely is as though the eye gave a false report to the brain; it produces confusion; it destroys confidence and trust.

VI. Falsehood Distinguished from Cowardice.—While a deliberate lie is a most serious sin, we are sometimes *hurried* or *frightened* into an untruth. This is not lying in the strict sense; it is *cowardice*. (It is always well to call things by their right names.) A truthful person will remedy this mistake by confessing it. Suggest to the class that they should be careful

not to hurry or frighten children or weak characters into this temptation (*e.g.* do not say suddenly to a little child, "Did you break this?" but rather, "When did you break this?"). It is a curious fact that conquered races often show a tendency to this form of untruth that springs from fear; on the other hand, the English, who have been a ruling race for so long, are noted for their truthfulness; it is said that in the parts of Spain where Wellington fought the peasants still say "word of an Englishman" to confirm their statement. We should like this to be the case all the world over; it rests with you and me to make it so.

[*Note.*—It is worth while to dwell on this cowardly form of untruth, since children will eschew what they can be taught to despise.]

VII. Some Common Forms of Falsehood.—While we label some of our failings as "cowardice," there are others we must label "untruth," and let us write the label very large:

1. *Exaggeration* is often excused as harmless. If we habitually exaggerate we are soon known to do so, and people take off something from all our statements; but as this must be guesswork we are useless as bearers of information. On the other hand, suppose we take a pride in being accurate, notice the result: people rely on us; they say "If So-and-So says it, it *is* so"; when anything extraordinary occurs we are believed in every detail. Surely this is a finer reward than the cheap and short-lived wonder produced by exaggeration. (Let the class discuss this point, as it is well within their powers of judgment. Our Lord's words may again be applied to people who exaggerate: "They *have* their reward.")

2. *Slander.*—The Catechism specially mentions slandering. What does it mean? Saying things about another person that cause him to be disliked or despised. It is that which when written is called a libel. Now it is really seldom that any one is evil enough to *invent* a slander; but what we are often tempted to do is this: to pass on *as true*

some report we have heard when we are not reasonably sure of it, or when we have heard it on very poor authority. In this way we may do untold damage. In some cases it may be necessary to warn others. For example, if a boy knows of anything wrong in his school it is his duty to report it to monitor or master. Lead the class to see that this is easily distinguished from spiteful tale-bearing. But what we must beware of is the temptation to pass on some little piece of ill-natured gossip merely for the sake of talking and being interesting. A very good rule to make is this: pass on all the good things about others that you hear, bury the disagreeable ones, and let us try to remember that to *listen* to slander is almost as bad as to utter it.

An old Spanish fable tells that the Tongue and the Sword were locked up in prison together, and that the Tongue asked the Sword what crime had been brought against him. The Sword answered that he had made some ugly cuts and had taken away life. "Is that all?" said the Tongue. "I every day speak blasphemies, I lie, I grumble, I speak scandals, I destroy friendships, I flatter, I sow distrust, I wear a man down by unjust accusations." "Stay," said the Sword; "my crimes are as nothing compared with yours; they are but as a spark to your fire." (Told in Newbolt's "Church Catechism.")

3. Then there is the *silent lie*. Perhaps you think this is impossible. But sometimes silence *means* something as plainly as words; in fact, silence itself may be a word according to our definition just now. If I let another person be blamed for what I have done, that is a silent lie. If I let my friend be wrongfully abused, or my school, or my Church, that is a silent lie. You know the saying "Silence gives consent."

"The cruellest lies are often told in silence. A man may have sat in a room for hours and not opened his teeth, and yet come out of that room a disloyal friend or a vile calumniator" (R. L. Stevenson).

4. *Acting a Lie*.—By this we mean any act that conveys a wrong impression about our thoughts, our

feelings, our real character. Any act may thus become a *word*. Get illustrations, if possible, from the class, such as: spending more money than you can afford in order to appear better off than you are; putting the largest fruit at the top of a basket; passing barrier as though you had a season ticket when you have not one; Jacob's deception of Isaac (Gen. xxvii.); Joab's treachery to Abner (2 Sam. iii. 27); Jael's treatment of Sisera (Judges iv. 18); Gehazi; Judas' kiss in Gethsemane; Ananias and Sapphira; massacre of Glencoe.

VIII. Our Lord's Words against Pretence.—Now again let us close by turning to Our Lord in the matter. Nothing seems to have moved Him to indignation so much as people whose outward actions did not correspond with their inner lives. Nearly the whole of St. Matt. xxiii. consists of His accusation of the Pharisees; He called them "hypocrites" because their life was a continual pretence to be what they were not. Even obvious sinners—thieves, murderers, drunkards, and suchlike—do not seem to have been blamed by Our Lord so strongly as hypocrites were. The obvious sinners themselves, and all around, are well aware of their condition. But people who are insincere and self-satisfied and fancy themselves good require to be awakened, to be shocked out of their condition, or they may at last reach the dreadful stage of not knowing truth from falsehood, and have in consequence what Plato called the "lie in the soul."

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Look at Ephes. iv. 25. Write down why you think it would be impossible for people to live together if they did not speak the truth.
2. Find some places in the Prayer-book where we pray for national truth and justice (Litany and Prayer for the Parliament).
3. Why is it wrong to exaggerate?
4. Tell any short story or anecdote to illustrate this lesson from the Bible or other history, or from fiction.

LESSON XXXVII

Just Dealing

Introduction.—Last time we were speaking about the tongue. The tongue is our chief means for expressing our thoughts; and the word stands for, or represents, all the different ways in which we can let others know about our inner selves. We saw that the great duty of the tongue is to be truthful. Now to-day we are to think about the work of the *hand*. The hand represents all our active powers of *work*. The duty of the hand is to be just, or honest. Let the class look at the Duty to My Neighbour, and select the words that deal with this question. "To be just in all my dealing: to keep my hands from picking and stealing: to learn and labour truly to get mine own living."

I. Just Dealing.—If you were to look at any of the writings of the great philosophers, you would be surprised at the amount of attention they pay to justice—what justice is, what a just man is like, how can we tell a just act from an unjust one, and so on. If this question was difficult in ancient Greece and in the Middle Ages, it is far more so now. Our life is so much more complicated now that it is more difficult to see the results of our actions. On the other hand, we have what the ancient world had not, the example of Christ's life, and the principles of conduct that He has given us.

To look ahead and make sure that all our dealings shall work out justly to others is perhaps impossible, but the duty remains for us to *try* to deal justly, and to use all our mind in endeavouring to understand the effect of our actions.

Let us take one instance. Our Lord says, "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow

of thee turn not thou away." (Let the class turn to the passage, St. Matt. v. 42.) These are quite plain words. The principle underlying them is *love*; we must never lose sight of our leading principle—to love our neighbour as ourselves. Sometimes we show more love by refusing to give than to give. Now look at St. Matt. vii. 9, 10. If we gave to every one who asks for money, it would often be like giving a stone or a serpent—that is, it would do the man more harm than good. (If necessary, the teacher can show in what way—by leading an idle man to be still more idle, and so gradually ruining him.) Similarly, to lend money to a wasteful schoolfellow may do him much harm. Shakespeare's words are *not* un-Christian when he says—

> Neither a borrower nor a lender be,
> For loan oft loses both itself and friend.

Ask the class to suggest some of the ways in which we really may try to "give to him that asketh," in a way that will not harm him, and which we trust Christ would approve as carrying out His command. The children may perhaps know something of societies formed to relieve definite wants in a wise way—*e.g.* Waifs and Strays, Charity Organisation Society, schools for the blind, soup-kitchens, night-shelters, hospitals, orphanages, workhouses.

II. Getting a Living.—There is one part of just dealing that is perfectly plain for us all. It is our *religious* duty to work for our living. The Fourth Commandment not only enjoins rest every seventh day, but work for the others: "Six days shalt thou labour." It has been said that there are only two ways of getting a living: we must either earn it or steal it. Of course it is obvious that if we do not work ourselves, some one else must work for us, or we should starve. If we are idle when we *can* work, we, in a sense, steal the work of others. We must remember the word "can." Many *cannot* because they have no chance (as in the parable, the labourers who said "No man hath hired us"). Many, again, are too ill or too old to work. It should also be pointed out to the class that there are many kinds of work besides manual

labour; that those who need not earn money for their daily bread can nevertheless work hard in service for others.

III. How Children Earn their Living.—Do boys and girls earn their living while they are at school? Certainly they do, if they work properly. The work done at school is a preparation to enable us to do our work well later on. Look at the words of the Catechism—"to *learn* and labour truly." To be idle at school is just as bad as to be idle in after-life. We earn our dinner and a night's rest as well by a good day at school as by a day at the plough.

IV. How we all Learn and Labour.—It is part of our duty, too, to *learn* all our days, to be always endeavouring to make our work better by studying it, no matter how simple its nature. It is in this way that great inventions have been made and beautiful things designed. In this way our work becomes a real delight to us.

"When your toil has been a pleasure, you have not earned money merely, but money, health, delight, and moral profit, all in one" (R. L. S.).

If we take an interest in our work and are enjoying it, we are often more *wealthy* than if we had a great deal of money. Money always brings worry and often brings misery, while an aim in life and interest in its work increase happiness to ourselves and others.

Point out to the class that *wealth* means much more than money; the word is connected with "well" and "weal" and includes everything that conduces to our happiness and "well-being."

V. Honesty.—Let the class *give their own ideas* as to the meaning of "honest."

> [*Note.*—The following points can be taken in the order suggested by the answers. They are in no sense intended to be exhaustive. The teacher should omit some and add other points, according to the temptations likely to assail the particular class. Care should be taken to avoid being personal.]

1. An honest man will respect all property that belongs to another. Some people who are quite honest in a matter of money or big things, think nothing of

"picking" or taking small things, such as fruit or flowers from a wayside orchard or garden, or copying another boy's work at school.

2. If an honest man *finds* anything belonging to another, he returns it, and if he does not know the owner he tries to find him. (Children should be instructed that the right thing to do is to take the article found to the police station.)

3. An honest man will not waste his employer's time. The class will be able to give illustrations, such as errand boys loitering.

4. An honest man will not get into debt—that is, will not borrow money that he is not likely to be able to repay.

5. An honest man will be honest in *all* his dealing, as the Catechism puts it. Some people think it no harm to cheat a company (by travelling without a ticket, for instance), or a tax-collector, or a Customs-house officer, or to keep too much change given in a shop.

6. An honest man will not sell anything as good when he knows it to be inferior, such as margarine as butter, or watered milk.

7. An honest man will always do his *best* work, whether overlooked or not.

8. An honest man will not encourage gambling. It may be suggested that gambling is wrong because we gain money for which we have not worked; may be depriving others of money which they ought not to part with; are seeking to gain by another's loss, and thus injuring the spirit of brotherhood and fostering selfishness. The excitement which gambling produces is also very apt to give a distaste for sober work, and often leads to dishonesty. Again, gambling adds nothing to the common wealth of the nation.

[*Note.*—The question of gambling should be dwelt on rather fully, or omitted entirely, according to the needs of the class; a separate time might be set aside for its discussion.]

VI. Honesty is Infectious.—Honest people often find that those whom they have to do with are honest. How is that? To a great extent they *make* them honest. Even

a rogue hesitates to cheat a man who deals perfectly straightly and does not suspect him. Honest people are seldom ready to be suspicious; they would rather be cheated now and again than suspect every one they meet.

Brutus, a typically honest character in Shakespeare, says when he is dying:

> **My heart doth joy that yet in all my life**
> **I found no man but he was true to me.**
> **("Julius Cæsar," v. 5.)**

Our Lord gives us this truth in one of His vivid word-pictures. Let the class turn to St. Luke vi. 38 and imagine the measure of corn, heaped up, pressed down, shaken together, and running over. Take this opportunity to impress again on the class that Our Lord's words seldom, if ever, refer exclusively to a future reward in another life, but state a law, a natural consequence, of a line of conduct here and now.

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Write a short essay on what you would like to be, the best way to prepare for it, the work that can be done in it, &c.; *or* write down your idea of an *honest* person.

2. Write out St. Luke vi. 38.

3. Look out Prov. xi. 1; xviii. 9, and say what you think each means.

4. In what *various* ways may we fulfil Christ's command to give to him that asketh?

5. Find the word "wealth," and examine its meaning, in the Communion Service (second prayer for the King), Morning Prayer, and Litany.

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—Find out exactly, if possible, what each member of the class is doing—whether still at school or at work, and if the latter, what work; keep this knowledge in mind when preparing the lesson, but be careful not to "preach at" the children, or to let any one pupil suspect that you are using his particular failings as illustrations.

LESSON XXXVIII

Self-Control

Introduction.—There is one phrase in the "Duty towards My Neighbour" which looks at first sight like a duty only to oneself. Let the class find the words "To keep my body in temperance, soberness, and chastity." We must consider to-day what the words imply, and why they are included here.

I. Our Body is a Kingdom.—When we are born into the world, each of us inherits a kingdom of his own. We are kings of our bodies. The duty of a king is to rule his kingdom as ably as he can; not to use it merely for his personal pleasure. Although the main features and characteristics of a country cannot be altered, it can be vastly improved by good government and thoughtful enterprise. So with the body.

II. We Must Govern It.—Our foremost duty as king of the body is to control it. To learn to do this quite thoroughly takes a lifetime, but we begin the work when we are quite little children, when we master our tears, wait for our sweets, and so on. One great philosopher (Locke) says that self-control ought to begin in the cradle, or else it will be difficult to begin at all. Why all this difficulty? Are our bodies so very unruly? Yes. Remind the class of our former talk on the lusts of the flesh. (See Lesson X.) We are all born with instincts, or tendencies to do certain actions, or "passions," or "humours" (to use varied expressions). None of them are entirely bad, but they all need control, or keeping within bounds.

> Lose not thyself, nor give thy humours way,
> God gave them to thee under lock and key.

III. Beginnings of Evil to be Checked.—One great point to remember in governing, whether it is a king over a kingdom, or a teacher with a class, or a parent with a child, or ourselves with our bodies, the point is the same —check the *beginnings* of disorder or evil. It is far easier to control a little evil than a big one, and a few single acts flourish into a habit with terrible haste. Fight against the phrase "Just this once," and other excusing catchwords. *Once* is the critical time; the *first* act makes the little pathway for the second, third, and hundredth. "Every smallest stroke of virtue or of vice leaves its never-so-little scar. The drunken Rip Van Winkle excuses himself for every fresh dereliction by saying, 'I won't count this time!' Well, he may not count it, and a kind Heaven may not count it; but it is being counted none the less. Down among his nerve-cells and fibres the molecules are counting it, registering, and storing it up to be used against him when the next temptation comes." (William James.)

The same writer says: "Keep the faculty of effort alive in you by a little exercise every day. That is, be heroic in little unnecessary points, do every day or two something for no other reason than its difficulty, so that, when the hour of dire need draws nigh, it may find you not unnerved and untrained to stand the test."

[In a class of boys the phrase "sowing your wild oats" may be referred to. It may be briefly pointed out that wild oats sown in a field will probably never be completely got rid of, and the soil is ever the poorer for them.]

IV. Health as a Duty.—Notice in the above quotation the words "the smallest stroke of *virtue*." It would indeed go hard with us if only evil left its mark. We must turn our attention to the good, and never brood over evil; have as little to do with it as possible, be sorry for anything we have done wrong, and then plunge at once into something right. A king is not entirely engaged in putting down rebellions, he has work to do for the good of his people. Now we must consider what *good* we can do for our bodies. Our first duty is to keep them *healthy*. We are too apt to look upon health as a

piece of good fortune rather than as a duty. Some people even think it heroic to be careless about their health. Of course, coddling ourselves is very bad, and thinking too much about our health defeats its own end; but a reasonable care is a duty (*e.g.* we can avoid overstraining our muscles, remaining in wet clothes, eating between meals, indulging in over-rich food, sleeping with our windows shut, frequenting crowded and, therefore, unhealthy places of amusement). A great deal of ill-temper, and still more of low spirits and depression, comes from ill-health. So it is a part of our *duty to our neighbour* to be as healthy as we can. A Greek philosopher went so far as to say that sick people ought to be sent to prison and criminals to hospital. This was, of course, an exaggeration, but there is much truth underlying it.

V. Capability a Duty.—Not only should we keep our body as healthy as possible, but as capable as possible. Just as a good king will mine his metals, irrigate his land, improve his harbours, and so on, so we, as kings of our bodies, must make them do their best. It is a good thing to have some little bodily ambition to strive after, such as to add an inch to our chest measure, to have a straight back, to be able to jump a certain height or length, to harden a muscle, to swim.

We can even increase the good appearance of our body, and to make ourselves as nice-looking as possible is a duty to our neighbour. The very first point in beauty is *cleanliness*. We get dirty with our work and our play, and quite rightly, but we can be thoroughly clean once a day in our whole body, and also the details of hair, teeth, and nails. Good temper makes our mouth a pleasant shape, and truthfulness and sincerity improve the look in our eyes, fresh air and exercise give a splendid colour to the cheeks. Nothing is better for body (and soul too) than walking in the fresh air; as some one quaintly said, "The devil never asks anyone to go for a walk with him."

VI. The Importance of Occupation.—The class are probably familiar with the truth that people who are busy

are generally well-behaved. "Satan tempts a busy person, but an idle person tempts Satan." Assuming that we work for our living, we still have our play-hours to fill. We cannot work hard *all* the day; recreation of some kind is a necessity; and it is an important question for each of us to settle what our recreations are to be. It is no recreation at all to be idle, unless, of course, we require absolute rest or sleep. The head-master of one of our public schools used to say to his boys: "Never be doing nothing. Either work, or play, or sleep. Never combine two of these."

Recreation may take a hundred shapes as we get older and see new people and new surroundings, but it gives us a splendid stand-by throughout life to have a "*hobby*," or even two or three; outdoor, daylight hobbies, and indoor ones for winter evenings and rainy days. Let the class tell any of their hobbies, and discuss the value of them.

"It is perhaps a more fortunate destiny to have a taste for collecting shells than to be born a millionaire. To become a botanist, a geologist, or an artist is to enlarge one's possessions in the universe by an incalculably higher degree, and by a far surer sort of property, than to purchase a farm of many acres." (R. L. S.)

[*Note.*—The power that an interest in higher things has over lower bodily instincts and pleasures is well brought out in the parable of the Argonauts passing the Sirens; the voice of Orpheus singing of the grand deeds of heroes *drowns* the voices of the tempters. This might be shortly told to the class, and the meaning drawn from them. It can be read in Kingsley's "Heroes."]

VII. Care of the Body a Religious Duty.—Perhaps some of you are thinking that all this has little to do with religion. But it is impossible to live by ourselves, and while we live with others our bodily condition affects them immensely, with help or hindrance. St. Paul says: "None of us liveth to himself" (Rom. xiv. 7), and again, "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?" Now turn to the Communion Service, and notice how sacredly the body is regarded in

the closing prayer: "Here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a *reasonable*, *holy*, and *lively* sacrifice unto Thee." Reasonable, holy, and full of life—there is a glorious and happy ideal.

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Read Rom. xii.
2. Think of any one way to improve your bodily powers.
3. Name any hobby you have, and think out how it can be made useful or pleasant to your *neighbour*.
4. Write down what you think these words exactly mean: temperance, recreation, habit.
5. In what different ways might one be intemperate in the use of words?

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—"Talks to Teachers," by William James; chapter on the "Laws of Habit." Find out beforehand what some of the children's hobbies are, and think over their value and any advice you can give about them.

Read Kingsley's "Heroes," "The Argonauts," Part V.

LESSON XXXIX

A Christian Gentleman

Introduction.—We reach to-day the final point in the Duty to Our Neighbour: "Not to covet nor desire other men's goods . . . to do my duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call me." It corresponds with the Tenth Commandment. Ask the class if they ever wondered at this Commandment, so unlike the rest, dealing with the thoughts of the heart rather than with outward acts. It is like a bit of the New Testament in the Old.

I. **Covetousness.**—"Take heed and beware of covetousness" Our Lord said. Ask the class why it is so dangerous; use their answers as much as possible, weaving in any of the following suggestions: The direct cause of so many crimes; characters in the Bible led astray or ruined by it—Jacob, Ahab, Gehazi, Judas; endless wars throughout history; commercial swindles of our own day.

Of course it is not wrong to wish for a thing, even very ardently. If we are determined to work for it honestly, a healthy ambition gives a shape to our working life, leads us to do our best, and, as we say, "better" ourselves. The Catechism does not bid us merely to do our duty in that state of life unto which God *has* called us, but *shall* call us—*i.e.* in every sphere into which we may go. And there is such a thing as a noble discontent, when it leads us to try to improve our surroundings and make the lives of those dependent on us happier. But the restless, aimless discontent that leads us to be ever casting eyes on the good fortune of others, and grumbling at our own ill-luck—that is covetousness, and does as much harm as hoarding up possessions for the mere sake of

having, which according to St. Paul is idolatry, because we become wrapped in our possessions and in a sense worship them.

II. Contentment.—A contented person is not only satisfied with his present condition (although he may be struggling to improve it), but is able to take pleasure in things he does not own. Socrates used to say that it was delightful to walk about among the shops of Athens and see so many things that he could do without. Those of us who live in large towns soon acquire the same point of view; we enjoy looking, without any idea of acquiring.

In one sense we *have* everything that we can understand and enjoy, such as scenery, pictures, music. It is in this sense that the words apply "To him that hath shall be given."

A contented mind is fairly easy to cultivate: a settled determination to look on the bright side of everything as it comes; this is at first a fascinating pursuit and quickly becomes a habit. This habit has been said to be worth ten thousand a year; and R. L. Stevenson says it is as good as a five-pound note to meet a person with a happy face. These are only figures of speech, for in truth *no* money can measure the value of cheerfulness.

III. Duty of Cheerfulness.—If it is possible to cultivate a cheerful temper, it is a duty to do so; good temper is said to be nine-tenths of Christianity; and certainly gloomy people, who are otherwise good, do a great deal of harm to their religion; they do not recommend it.

A man once went to see some very poor people in a London back-street; a woman and her children were living in one room, and had the hardest struggle to keep it decent; as the visitor was going he noticed a paper pinned to the wall with writing on it, and had the curiosity to read it; he found these words neatly printed: "No grumbling allowed."

You often hear it said, "Be good, and you will be happy"; it is almost as true to put it the other way round: "Be happy, and you will be good."

It has been said that to have everything you want is the subtlest form that misfortune can take.

Art thou poor, yet hast thou golden slumbers?
O sweet content!
Art thou rich, yet in thy mind perplexed?
O punishment!
Dost thou laugh to see how fools are vexed
To add to golden numbers, golden numbers?
O sweet content!
Canst drink the waters of the crispèd spring?
O sweet content!
Swim'st thou in wealth, yet sink'st in thine own tears?
O punishment!
Then he that patiently want's burden bears
No burden bears, but is a king, a king!
O sweet content!

IV. Our Lord's Cheerfulness.—We so often think of the great solemnity of Our Lord's life on earth (and rightly) that we are apt to forget the joyfulness of His nature. Get the class to recall some words of His that show this: *e.g.* "Let not your heart be troubled"; "Be of good cheer"; "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you"; "These things have I spoken unto you, that *my joy* might remain in you"; "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

V. General View of the Christian Character.—We have now reached the end of the Duty towards Our Neighbour, and I want you to describe in your own words the sort of character you picture in your minds, after our study of it. (Let each member of the class contribute *one* point in the character, regardless of order, perhaps only an adjective, thus: a true member of the Church will be kind, humble-minded, loyal, true, just, self-controlled, contented.)

We might call this the Church's definition of a gentleman. The word "gentle" really means behaving naturally and lovingly to those near to you in relationship. The word "kind" has exactly the same meaning. "Kind" means being loyal to the members of your family, clan, society, or *kin*; "kind" is used in its original sense in the phrase in Genesis "after their kind," and in the Litany, "the kindly fruits of the earth." Now a Christian is one who looks upon everybody as a fellow-member of God's family, or as his *kin*, to whom he must therefore be *kind*, or *gentle*.

Thus in defining a gentleman or gentlewoman we come again to the "new commandment" or golden rule, "My duty towards my neighbour is to love him as myself, and to do unto all men as I would they should do unto me."

VI. Some Other Ideals of Character.—In closing this section of the Catechism it may interest you to compare this ideal of character with some others. Let us first look at one or two from the Bible.

One of the Psalms has been called a description of a gentleman. Let the class turn to Psalm xv. and compare it with the Catechism (*e.g.* the uncorrupt life answers to keeping the body in temperance and chastity; verse 4 answers to the "looking up" of the humble-minded). Next let the class read the Prophet Micah's ideal (vi. 8); and then St. James's (i. 25-27).

Here is Fuller's summing-up of the character of Sir Francis Drake: "Chaste in his life, just in his dealings, true of his word; merciful to those that were under him, and hating nothing so much as idleness." Fuller must have learned his Catechism, just as we do; one phrase in this seems borrowed from it. (Let the class pick it out.)

Here is the poet Browning's description of a character that emphasises a quality omitted in Fuller's ideal:—

> A friend-making, everywhere friend-finding soul,
> Fit for the sunshine, so it followed him,
> A happy-tempered bringer of the best
> Out of the worst.

Here is a philosopher's ideal. Bacon says: "It is Heaven upon earth to have a man's mind move in charity, rest in Providence, and turn upon the poles of truth."

For some classes the following ideal of King Arthur's Knights of the Round Table may be appropriate:—

> To reverence the king, as if he were
> Their conscience, and their conscience as their king,
> To break the heathen and uphold the Christ,
> To ride abroad redressing human wrongs,
> To speak no slander, no, nor listen to it,
> To honour his own word as if his God's,
> To lead sweet lives in purest chastity,
> To love one maiden only, cleave to her,
> And worship her by years of noble deeds,
> Until they won her.—(Tennyson's "Guinevere.")

Or the following lines of Wordsworth's might be read:—

A Being breathing thoughtful breath,
A traveller between life and death;
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;
A perfect woman, nobly planned,
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a spirit still, and bright
With something of angelic light.

VII. Our Master.—Let us turn our last thought to Christ's ideal. No rules, no form of words, but the *life lived.*

The best of men
That e'er wore earth about Him was a sufferer,
A soft, meek, patient, humble, tranquil spirit,
The first true gentleman that ever breathed.
(Dekker.)

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Write out this Eastern proverb: "I had no shoes and I murmured till I met a man who had no feet."
2. Learn "Sweet Content."
3. Read Psalm xv.
4. Name some of your heroes in history, and say what quality you admire most in each.
5. Write out the quotation you like best in this lesson.
6. Write down your own idea of the character you admire most.

Suggestion for Teacher's Study.—"Unto this Last," Essay IV.

Portrait of Bishop Goodrich.

LESSON XL

Prayer: Instinctive and Revealed

Introduction.—We have been for several weeks discussing the great ideals of Christian conduct, which carry out the vow of obedience. We can imagine the writer of these "Duties" feeling the tremendous requirements involved in them. Does the class remember the name of the writer? Show portrait of Bishop Goodrich. So he puts into the mouth of the Catechist, not a question, but a gentle, and almost affectionate, little sermon. It opens the third chapter of the Catechism, which deals with the *help* given us to carry out our vow.

Let the teacher read aloud the words of the Catechist: "My good child," &c. The class should learn it by heart, later. Our subject to-day is Prayer; why we pray; and what we should pray for. And *any* questions or difficulties on the matter that you yourselves have felt can be brought up, so that we may discuss them together.

I. Prayer in the Catechism.—Is this the first mention of prayer in the Catechism? Let the class find how prominently it is placed in Answer 4; and again that it is part of our duty to God "to call upon Him." But it is so important a subject that we have left it to consider separately.

II. God Calls us to Pray by Nature.—It seems as though the command to *pray* were more emphatic than any other. There is perhaps no nation, however savage, that has not the instinct for prayer; the form may be crude, the sacrifices even horrible, but the desire to pray to God is there. Again, people who lead godless lives fall naturally to prayer when in sudden danger, showing that the instinct is still alive, though smouldering.

III. By Revelation.—Again, the Bible is full of prayer, and noble examples of it; so that God's Word of Inspiration as well as His Word of Nature teaches us to pray. Let the class give as many instances as they can remember from the Old Testament. The following amongst others may be obtained by suggestive questions: Abraham pleading for Sodom (Gen. xviii.). Jacob's prayer, so earnest and *energetic* that it is described as wrestling all night (Gen. xxxii. 24). Moses' *unselfish* and pathetic prayer for the Israelites after the worship of the golden calf (Ex. xxxii. 31). Elijah's prayer for rain (1 Kings xviii. 42). Hezekiah's prayer of absolute *trust* in the midst of desperate danger (2 Kings xix.). The whole story should be briefly told if not familiar to the class; some of them may have learned Byron's lines, "The Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold." Daniel gives an example of *bravery* in prayer: the class probably know the story well, but Dan. vi. 10 should be read. Solomon's majestic and *humble* prayer at the dedication of the Temple (1 Kings viii. 22-53) should be in the teacher's mind, and a verse or two of it may be read to the class. The Book of Psalms may be regarded as a book of inspired prayers.

IV. By Christ's Example.—But God's most special "word" to man was the life of His Son. Now the life of Christ on earth was a life of prayer; we read more about His praying than that of any one else. Let the class give any occasions they can remember on which Our Lord prayed—at His baptism (St. Luke iii. 21); all night before He chose the Twelve (vi. 12); at the Transfiguration (ix. 29); before the Great Question (ix. 18); in Gethsemane (xxii. 40-42); on the Cross (xxiii. 34).

There is a beautiful description in St. Mark i. of His staying at St. Peter's house, working till late in the evening; and then, getting up in the dark of the early morning, going away by Himself to a lonely place to pray. This gives us to understand that it was not only on critical occasions that Our Lord prayed, but that it was a continual habit of His life.

V. By the Example of His Church—Not only did Christ set an example of prayer, but He urged His

disciples to pray. ("Pray ye the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers"; "Pray that ye enter not into temptation"; "Watch and pray.") We see in the "Acts" how devotedly they carried out the command. The following passages should be known to the teacher, and briefly referred to: Acts i. 14; ii. 42; iv. 31; vi. 4; especially the account of the united prayer for Peter in xii. 12; xiii. 3.

The Church has carried on the work of prayer without ceasing, in public worship, and in private devotions, from these earliest days till now. There have been special brotherhoods and sisterhoods whose chief work in life has been prayer.

VI. Why Should we Pray?—We shall never perhaps understand all the reasons for prayer, but the command is unmistakable: "Ask, and it shall be given you." We are not allowed to decide for ourselves in this matter. And it must be remembered that prayer is not confined to asking; it is communion with God, and is a necessity for man who has been made in the image of God.

We see in how many different ways God has led us to pray to Him. The question may arise in our minds, Why is this? If God is our Father, all-loving and all-wise, and knows what we need before we ask, why should we ask? Might it not seem a lack of trustfulness to ask for anything at all? (Give the class time to consider this point.) The following ideas may be suggested to the class as a *partial* answer to this important question. An earthly father who loves his children likes them to ask for what they want, and talk to him of their plans and schemes, and *seek* his help, although he may know quite well what they need; for all this increases their love for him. In the same way, if we did not ask God for His gifts, we might very soon cease to think of them in connection with Him at all.

Again, it is a frequently observed fact that we do not value a thing properly, and make the *most* of it, until we have felt the need of it. A famous schoolmaster used to make a rule of never giving any information to his class until they felt their ignorance and wanted the information.

It meant hard work, no doubt, for him and for the boys, but every fact imparted in this way was a treasure.

VII. What we are to Pray for.—Look at the Catechism again, and notice that we are to call for "God's special grace." (Let the class express their ideas as to the meaning of "grace.") Some modern translators of the Bible use the word "blessing" instead of "grace" when it occurs (as it so often does) in St. Paul's letters. But the word "help" is the simplest and best meaning of grace. "Special" means "in a particular case"; so that the Catechism tells us we are to call for God's help in our particular difficulty. To put it like this into our more ordinary language makes it seem more homely and real. We are to call for God's help in *all* our difficulties, not only in our spiritual ones but in the ordinary ones of every-day life and means of living. The captain of a vessel came safely into a Welsh port after a most dangerous passage through a storm; his friends were surprised at his having achieved it. "Well," he said, "there was Some One helping me with the wheel, or I should never be here." That captain was what we may call a prayerful man, being so much in touch with God that he felt all the help he had came directly from God. This prayerful habit is not acquired without some pains on our part. Next time we will consider how we learn to pray.

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Write out as beautifully as you can and learn the words of the Catechist, "My good child, know this . . ."

2. Describe in your own words the circumstances of the prayer you think most beautiful in the Old Testament.

3. Find in the General Thanksgiving the words in which we thank God for Prayer.

4. Look at the Communion Service and notice how prayer follows each commandment. Write out the last of these.

5. Learn or write out the last Collect but one at the close of the Communion Service.

6. Read the Collect for the Twelfth Sunday after Trinity, and notice the thoughts about prayer that it suggests.

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—"Some Elements of Religion" (Liddon), chapter on "Prayer, the Characteristic Action of Religion"; "The Church Catechism Explained" (Robinson), Part IV. chap. i.; "Christian Character" (Illingworth; Macmillan, 6*d.*), chapter on "Prayer."

LESSON XLI

Our Lord's Teaching about Prayer

Introduction.—Revise briefly the ways in which God has led mankind to pray. Turn to the Catechism and notice the words: "Which thou must *learn* at all times to call for by diligent prayer."

I. The Disciples Asked to be Taught.—By "learning" to pray is not meant only the learning of words of a prayer when we are little children, although this is included. We are learning how to pray all our lives. You remember the twelve disciples came to Our Lord one day after He had been praying, and asked Him to teach them to pray, as John the Baptist had taught his disciples. Now these men were Jews, and religious Jews. It was the custom for Jews to pray at least three times a day, so that prayer can have been no new idea to them. But they evidently felt that the new life which Christ was opening up to their eyes demanded all their powers, and more than all their powers, and the prayers to which they had been accustomed were not sufficient. We know how much the Pharisees made of prayer. Saul of Tarsus was a strict Pharisee, and had been accustomed to pray regularly and frequently all his life, and yet we have the remarkable words said of him after his conversion, "Behold, he prayeth!" as if it were a new thing. (See Acts ix. 11, and let the class notice to whom these words are ascribed.)

II. Our Lord's Lessons on Prayer are very fully given in the Gospels (especially in St. Luke's). Leaving the Lord's Prayer to consider separately, let us gather together all we can of what Our Lord taught as to how and when and where we are to pray. Let the class have time to recall any parables or incidents that deal with

prayer. Write on the board all correct contributions. Select first those that deal with

III. Importunity.—Let the class tell the parables of the man rousing his friend at midnight, and of the widow and the judge (or read them: St. Luke xi. 5; xviii. 1). The meaning is clear; we must *keep on* praying for what we want. The incident of the Syro-Phœnician woman is an object-lesson on the same point. (Read or tell St. Matt. xv. 21-28.)

Now let the class turn to St. Matt. vi. 7: "They think they shall be heard for their much speaking." Ask the class if they think these words contradict in any way the teaching of the parables. No! There is a great distinction between much praying and much speaking. When we really pray our whole heart and soul and mind and strength are bent on the matter, like the poor mother whose daughter was ill. But much speaking and vain or empty repetitions are so-called "prayers" said mechanically, not because we want what we ask for, but because we think we ought to say them.

In Shakespeare's "Hamlet" the king cannot be sorry for his evil deeds; he kneels and tries to pray, but ends in despair with the words which all of us should take to heart:

> My words fly up, my thoughts remain below;
> Words without thoughts never to heaven go.

To show to what lengths mechanical prayer can be carried, reference may be made to the prayer-wheels of the Tibetans. These are cylinders filled with rolls of paper, on which prayers are written, and then made to revolve on a stick. Some wheels are carried in the hand to turn as you walk; others are placed at the doors of houses to be twirled by every one who enters. There are larger ones actually moved by water-power.

IV. When? Always.—The class will know the words of Our Lord, "Watch and pray." In St. Luke xxi. 36, the expression is "pray always." Quote St. Paul's words on the same point (Rom. xii. 12; 1 Thess. v. 17; also 1 Peter iv. 7).

Now at first this seems like a rule for a praying brotherhood, or for those who are able to devote their

whole lives to religious exercises. But on the same occasion that Our Lord said "Watch and pray" He added, "What I say unto you I say unto all, Watch!" (St. Mark xiii. 33-37.) It is evidently meant for us all. How, then, can we pray always? It need not mean putting our prayer into actual words always, but is rather a habit of continual reliance on God's help, a thought running, as it were, "at the back of our mind," even while we are thinking about our work or our play. Our soul can be always watching and always praying.

V. Diligent Prayer.—We notice that the Catechism requires prayer to be "at all times" and also "diligent." The word "diligent" implies perseverance and importunity (what Our Lord called "taking the kingdom of Heaven by violence"), but it also suggests a steady regularity. A diligent boy is one who does his work systematically day by day—not by fits and starts. Diligent prayer is like this too—not *only* a violent importunity when we want something, not *only* a habit of mind, but a regular piece of work.

Turning again to Our Lord's example we find all these aspects of prayer illustrated. Constant little ejaculations are recorded for us in the Gospels, giving us a glimpse of His habit of mind (St. Luke xxiii. 46; St. Mark vii. 34; St. Luke x. 21; St. John xi. 41, xii. 28). His importunity is shown in Gethsemane (St. Luke xxii. 44), and His treatment of prayer as work is shown by His frequently going apart to pray (St. Mark i. 35; St. Luke xi. 1).

VI. Where? Private and Public Prayer.—Does Our Lord give any directions as to these regular prayers? Perhaps the class can finish the quotation "When thou prayest . . ." (St. Matt. vi. 6). Prayer is to be made as private and secret as possible. But does Our Lord object to public prayer altogether? Again the class can finish the quotation "Where two or three are gathered together . . ." (St. Matt. xviii. 19, 20). He also quoted approvingly the words: "My House shall be called the House of Prayer." Also refer to His example in the Temple, in synagogues, at the great feasts, and on the Sabbath days. We also know that He gave His dis-

ciples a *form* of prayer that they might use together. But before we begin to study this there is one more important question about prayer in general that we must look at.

VII. Is all Prayer Answered?—(If this question is in any way raised before this point, the teacher should deal with it immediately.) Yes, certainly it is. But it is abundantly evident that we do not always get the exact thing we ask for, although we may have prayed diligently and humbly. How is this? We frequently want a thing that seems pleasant and good in every way, but which is really harmful; God withholds it. Later on we often see the reason for this, but sometimes we never do in this life, and we must simply believe that the reason is there.

> **God remembereth man's weakness,**
> **But His saints He bids endure.**

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Find as many instances as you can of prayer being answered (*e.g.* Gen. xxiv. 12-15; St. Luke i. 13).

2. Make a list of Our Lord's parables dealing with prayer, with the chief lesson of each.

3. In what different ways can we *learn* to pray? (Compare it in your mind with the way you learn to do anything else, such as to play the piano, to speak a foreign language, to do carpentering.)

4. Find the prayer of St. Chrysostom and say—why it is appropriate at the close of a service; to which Person of the Trinity it is addressed; the meaning of the word "common"; on what promise it is based.

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—In preparing Paragraph VII. notice carefully St. Matt. vii. 9, 10, 11. Paragraph VII. stands apart from the rest of the lesson and may well be omitted entirely if the class do not appear to require it; it is a difficulty that is more effectively met when raised by the pupil than by the teacher.

LESSON XLII

The Lord's Prayer in the Church

Introduction.—We have seen how Our Lord taught us to pray, by His example and by direct instruction. We must now give our minds to the *form* of prayer that He gave us—the Lord's Prayer.

I. Necessity for a Form of Prayer.—Before we look at the separate clauses of the prayer, let us ask first, "Why should we have a *form* of prayer at all?" The fact that Our Lord *did* give a form (in spite of what we might expect from His dislike of *formalism*) makes it all the more important that we should understand why He did so. The Church has used forms of prayer from the earliest times. We are all familiar with the prayers that are used in church. Let the class discuss the question whether it is an advantage or not for us to know the prayers so well. When words become very familiar they are apt to lose their force. But on the other hand, when we meet together to pray, *in common*, for what we all need, it becomes necessary to use prayers that we all know. If not, one man has to pray for all the rest, or else every one has to pray for himself in silence. Neither of these modes allows the congregation to unite their prayers with the fervour that numbers give. Let the class open their Prayer-books at Morning Prayer, and notice how very large a part the congregation takes in it—the General Confession, the Creed, the Versicles, the frequent "Amen," and so on.

II. Other Advantages of Forms.—Not only are forms of prayer a necessity if we are to have a united and hearty service, in which the congregation takes part; but there are other advantages. The prayers in this book ("Common Prayer") have all been written by men of

holy lives, with the greatest care; they are for the most part founded on the words of Scripture, and are made to suit the needs of all. The words of many of them have been hallowed by centuries of use in the Church. They become very dear to us, as we should find if we were deprived of them (for instance, by emigration to some place where the Church Service was unknown). And although we admit that they may lose a little force from being familiar, we can prevent this by studying them, and so getting more and more into their meaning.

III. **The Lord's Prayer Used Universally.**—All that we have said about forms of prayer in general applies with far greater force to the Lord's Prayer. If other prayers are valued because composed by holy men, how much more the one from Our Lord's own lips! No prayer has been so universally used by Christians. Even among those who do not approve of forms at all, we find this prayer used. The words are so simple that they can be translated into every language. We all learned it as children. (Ask the class if they remember when they first learned it—probably not.) Remind the class of the little horn-books, with the Lord's Prayer written after the alphabet, as though in those far-back days it was the first thing to be learned (see Lesson II.). Perhaps they have seen or heard of a rosary, with ten small beads for "Hail, Mary," and one large bead for the Lord's Prayer and so on, up to fifty beads. The word "bead," that we use for the little well-known coloured ornaments, really means a *prayer*. The words "the friar walked forth to tell his beads" meant that he went out to say his prayers.

IV. **Danger of Constant Repetition.**—Just as our reverence for the Lord's Prayer is greater than for any other, so it is quite evident the danger arising from familiarity is greater. Our minds are so constituted that they *cannot* attend intelligently to words that are repeated again and again at short intervals, and we are all in very real danger of saying the words inattentively. We must, therefore, take special pains to understand the prayer, though we shall never get to the full depth of its

meaning. Countless books and sermons have been written upon it.

V. The Lord's Prayer is Often Prefaced.—First let us see how the Church uses the Lord's Prayer in public worship. It seems as though the compilers of our Prayer-book desired to guard against the danger of saying the words thoughtlessly, by preparing for it, or leading up to it, with the words "Lord have mercy upon us," &c. (Let the class look for this, in Morning and Evening Prayer, and Litany.) These may be used as a little prayer for attention. The expression "Let us pray" is meant as a hint to attention.

VI. Why Used Twice at the Communion Service and at Morning Prayer.—Ask the class if they have noticed that the Lord's Prayer is used *twice* at Morning Prayer, and, if the *Litany* is read, *three* times. Why is this? The Litany is really a separate service, and the Lord's Prayer is naturally placed in every service. But still we have to account for its being placed twice in Morning (or Evening) Prayer. We need a little history to account for this. At one time the service began at "O Lord, open Thou our lips," preceded by the Lord's Prayer said privately by the priest and people. (Let the class have their Prayer-books open.) After the Reformation the General Confession and Absolution were placed at the beginning, where you see them now, and the Lord's Prayer was directed to be said *audibly*. (Let one of the class read the rubric aloud.) Originally, then, the first part of the Morning Service was entirely praise, and prayer did not begin till after the Creed, where naturally the Lord's Prayer is said first. It is here as the central act of the service, following upon expression of faith in the Creed.

If we turn now to the great service, the *Communion Service*, we again find the Lord's Prayer twice; and for the same reason. In old days it was said the first time privately by the priest. Even now the people never join in this repetition of it, never even say the Amen. (Notice the way in which the Amen is printed.) The second time it occurs it is placed in the most important place, immediately after Communion.

VII. **The Lord's Prayer in Other Services.**—We have seen how the Lord's Prayer is placed in the most *solemn position* in Morning Prayer, and in the Communion Service—immediately after the Creed in the former, and in the latter immediately after every one has received Holy Communion. The same principle is adhered to in the other services. Let the class turn to the Public Baptism of Infants: perhaps before looking they will be able to judge that the Lord's Prayer is here said immediately after the child is received into the Church. Where will you expect it in the Confirmation Service? Immediately after the Bishop has confirmed all the candidates, so that it becomes the first public act of the newly confirmed. It is also the first prayer after people are married. In the beautiful service for the Burial of the Dead (perhaps some of the class have attended this) it is placed at the moment when the earth has been thrown upon the grave.

From all these we see that the Church gives the Lord's Prayer the chief place in all her services.

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Print or illuminate the Lord's Prayer as beautifully as you can.
2. Write down where the Lord's Prayer occurs in the following services: Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Communion.
3. Find the Lord's Prayer in St. Matthew and St. Luke, and notice any differences.
4. Why are forms of prayer necessary?

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—Ruskin's "Letters to the Clergy—the Lord's Prayer"; "Church Doctrine Bible Truth" (Sadler), chap. vi., on "Forms of Prayer and the Priesthood of the People"; Bishop Gore on "The Lord's Prayer," price 6*d*.

LESSON XLIII

The Lord's Prayer: The Petitions (1)

Introduction.—We are now to look at the Lord's Prayer more closely. It has been called Christianity in little, or the Gospel in its simplest form. Missionaries find they can translate it into any language, however limited, and some languages are naturally very limited indeed, with few ideas and few words. The words can easily be committed to memory, but on the other hand their meaning is inexhaustible. Our Lord told us to pray "after this manner," not requiring us, of course, to use these exact words always, but to use them as a model.

[*Note.*—The class may be reminded that a copy of the Lord's Prayer (together with the Creed) was given to the catechumens at their baptism, and the prayer is looked upon as the special prayer of the *baptized.*]

I. The Address.—Ask the class what is meant by the "address" of a prayer. Let them read aloud, or quote, some addresses from the Prayer-book, such as "Almighty and ever-living God"; "Almighty God, the Fountain of all Goodness"; "O God, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind." The "Our Father" appears to be far simpler than these. But you are old enough to understand now that long or unusual words are by no means always so difficult as simple and usual ones. Think of the first word, "Our." When we look at the people around us—separated from us in all kinds of ways and including both the holiest and the most sinful—and then remember that when we pray we are

praying for them and with them; that we cannot speak for ourselves without speaking for them; that if we do not carry their needs to the throne of God's grace we do not carry our own; that all the good we hope to obtain there belongs to them just as much as to us—it is then that the difficulty of praying "Our Father" becomes a very practical one—at least for many of us.

Let the class notice that not only the address, but the whole prayer is for "us" and "our," not "me" and "mine," and this ought to be ever present in our minds when we use it. Ask the class if they think this is a difficulty too. Some children may not find it so; but certainly to most it is difficult not to *think* only of our personal needs, although we *speak* of the needs of us all.

In the use of the word "*Father*" we have, as it were, the whole Gospel packed. Remind the class of the chief Article of our belief, and how all the rest of the Creed seemed to flow from it.

Heaven is twice mentioned in this short prayer. We address Our Father as being "in Heaven," and we pray that His Name may be hallowed, His Kingdom may come, and His will may be done in earth "as in Heaven." (Tell the class that this phrase should relate to each of the first three petitions, and not only to God's will; the stops should be commas.) Our Lord frequently uses this expression, "in Heaven" (*e.g.* St. Matt. v. 45, 48; vi. 1, 26; xxiii. 9). He seems to lead us continually to think of a larger, wider world of life than this, inhabited by "intelligent spiritual creatures; by wills which might have fallen, but which stood in holy, cheerful obedience." Our minds are to be turned from thinking of our sinful world as the centre of everything and the pattern of everything.

II. The Order of the Petitions.—The most striking point in which the Lord's Prayer is a model for all prayer is the *order* in which the petitions are placed. The first three, that is half the prayer, are really an act of worship—an expression of love and adoration—rather than *mere* petitions. They lift us out of our-

selves; they take us into a heavenly atmosphere; they help us to see things in right proportion; they prevent us from hurrying into personal wants and difficulties. If the first part of the prayer is used rightly many of these wants disappear or dwindle into insignificance. Left to ourselves we should have imagined it more natural to ask first for bread—our means to live at all; or at least to confess our sins and ask for forgiveness. But no; Our Lord, Who, as we know, hated vain repetitions, bids us postpone even these for something more important still.

III. "**Hallowed be Thy Name.**"—(Invite the class here, and in each case, to express their own ideas as to the meaning.) It is no doubt a prayer for reverence, that we should treat God's Name as sacred, and His Word, and His House, and His day. But it means more than this. God's Name, as we have seen, stands for God Himself. It is man's ignorance of God's Name, or Nature, or Character, that has led to gross and cruel superstition—for instance, the human sacrifices of the ancients, the cruel religious persecutions of later times. But to-day perhaps we are almost free from such things. Yes, but there are other dark and wrong thoughts of God; thoughts of Him as a vague Presence somewhere, instead of a living Person to be loved and trusted; or as One Who despises His creatures and leaves them undisturbed to their wickedness; or, again, as One Who is only to be thought of in danger and trouble and death. (Such an idea is described with terrible insight in the death of Falstaff.)

Notice that the prayer is not so much that *we* may hallow God's Name as that it may *be* hallowed. We pray that God Himself will reveal more and more of His Nature to us, as He has done in the past, and thus answer this prayer. "It was answered in the old time by the calling of every holy man; by the Divine Law; by the whole life and death of the only-begotten Son. It was answered by the gift of the Holy Spirit to abide with the Church for ever. It is answered by our baptism into the holy and blessed Name. It

is answered by Confirmation and prayers and Holy Communions, by individual trials, by the conversion of sinners, by dying beds. It will be answered when we all yield ourselves up to the Spirit of God that we may accomplish the work which He has given us to do."

IV. "Thy Kingdom Come."—Invite the class to give their ideas as to the meaning of this and weave the following suggestions round their answers in any order. It may be a prayer for Christ's second coming, but the class may again be reminded that Our Lord's words generally refer to the present. It may be a prayer for greater loyalty to Christ and His Church in ourselves and our fellow-members. But especially we must regard it as a missionary prayer. The number of missionary societies is so great and the field of work so extended that this prayer tends to become vague. To prevent this let us each one get all the information we can about *one* corner of the globe—how the people live, what their religion is, how many churches have been built there, what society is working there, and so on. Then this prayer can be a definite one for them. (The teacher should say here a few words about the place in which he himself feels most interest.) The difficulties of missionaries are enormous. God wills that the work shall be done by our means, and He specially tells us that He wants our prayers. "Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the Harvest. . . " (Let the class finish the quotation.) And here it is put in the forefront of the Lord's Prayer. Can you recall any of our other prayers in church that are specially missionary? Distinguish in the Litany where we pray for "all Thy people" from the prayer for mercy upon "all men." The former is for the Church, the latter is a missionary prayer. See also the opening sentence of the prayer for All Conditions of Men—the third Collect for Good Friday—Psalm lxvii. sung at Evening Prayer. (These may be looked up if time permits, or left for additional work afterwards.)

V. "Thy will be done."—Discuss with the class the use of the word "will." What is a person like who has a strong will? Contrast this sharply with one who

insists on having his own *way*. A wilful child ought properly to be called a wayful child. Wilfulness and obstinacy are quite opposed to self-control and real strength of will. A great philosopher has said that the best thing in the world is a strong, good will. It is intention rather than power. To think of God's will in this petition as mere power and sovereignty is to fall into one of those errors we were just speaking of. We cannot hallow God's Name if we think *power* is His chief characteristic and His chief delight. It is a natural tendency of man to worship power in all its different shapes and appearances. But the whole Bible from Genesis to Revelation is a protest against this, teaching us that God is righteous and loving and the Author of all that is good in the universe and in each of our lives. This very prayer reminds us not that we *cannot* go against God's will, but that we *can* and *do*. It is a prayer that our wills, which He has given us, may not thwart and retard His intentions for us and for the world.

The class are very likely to mention Our Lord's use of this prayer in Gethsemane and speak of it as a prayer of resignation. This idea of resignation needs a little discussion. The prayer in Gethsemane we can never fathom; we shall never be able to comprehend how terrible was the hour from which Christ asked to be saved. We speak in the Litany of those moments in the garden as being, with the Cross, a means of delivering us. (Let the class quote the words.) We cannot think of our own troubles as approaching this. People are too apt to take a kind of virtue to themselves in saying "Thy will be done," resigning themselves as they call it, as though to some capricious tyrant who willed their discomfiture. Such resignation is not at all a Christian state of mind. God wills the very best for us always; He is entirely loving and entirely wise. You know sometimes at home you set your heart on a thing that your father or mother is forced to refuse you. What a difference it is to them if you answer cheerfully "All right, father," rather than *gloomily*

obey; and what a difference to your own character and your own happiness! The spirit of the Psalms is almost entirely one of cheerful compliance with God's will. (See, for instance, Ps. xliii. 5, 6; lxxxiv. 5, 6.) There is a line of the poet Dante which puts the whole matter shortly and beautifully. Some of the dwellers in Paradise are asked if they do not long for a higher place, "more to behold, and more in love to dwell." No, they say, they are happier where they are placed by God, for "In His will is our peace" ("In la sua volontate è nostra pace," "Paradiso," III.).

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Write out the first sentence of the prayer for All Conditions of Men.

2. Name the country in which you are chiefly interested as a mission field and anything about it that you know. Draw a sketch-map to show its position.

3. Learn the "Deus Misereatur" from Evening Prayer.

4. Write out and learn the first sentence of the explanation of the Lord's Prayer.

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—Be prepared to suggest to the class from what sources they can learn more about missionary work in any country. Maurice's "Sermons on the Lord's Prayer" (the passages quoted above are from this book).

LESSON XLIV

The Lord's Prayer: The Petitions (2)

Introduction.—Revise briefly the division of the Lord's Prayer into two sections. Last time we were thinking about the first three petitions. They are all prayers for God's glory and for the highest needs of man. If we have put these petitions thoughtfully and earnestly, we begin to see things in their right proportion; the great needs of mankind at large, and our own highest needs, appear more important than our personal wants and even than our sins. It is the last three petitions, for ourselves, that we must think about to-day.

I. "Give us this day our daily bread."—Ask the class the meaning of "bread" here. It stands for all the simple, healthy necessities of life—food, home, shelter, and so on, what we call in the Litany "the kindly fruits of the earth." But life does not consist entirely of these: man does not live by bread alone: we need friends, beautiful sights and sounds, and "all the blessings of this life," as the General Thanksgiving says. Also the means of grace, referred to there and in Hymn 381, thus: "And for richer food than this—pledge of everlasting bliss." How does the Catechism expand the word "bread"? (Let the class read "all things that be needful, both for our souls and bodies.")

Notice the word "us" instead of "me." Again we are praying for "all people." Let the class suggest some of the people for whom we might specially pray in these words: the sick and old; people out of work; "fatherless children and widows, and all that are desolate and oppressed." (It helps the class to appreciate the

Litany more if its words are thus quoted in fresh connections.) The thought of others being hungry and cold and shelterless stirs us to greater pity than anything else. Praying for them in this way again turns our mind from our own lesser troubles.

Notice next the words "this day" and "daily." Here we touch on another great Christian principle—the absence of worry about the future. (Let the class quote some of Our Lord's words on this: *e.g.* St. Matt. vi. 25-34.) We only pray for the needs of the actual day we are in. This shows us incidentally that Our Lord intended it for a *daily* prayer.

Lastly, we must notice the word "give." The Catechism loses something by altering it to "send" in the Explanation. To *give* a thing to any one suggests a very personal relation. We pray that God will not only cause us to have what we need, but will let us feel that it comes straight from His hand, and let us see Him in all our surroundings. Thus, if something very good happens to us we feel that God gives it and means us to be joyful; if we have to do without something, we feel that God means us to do without; and if disappointment, loss, pain, come to us, He *gives* these too. It makes these far easier to bear.

II. "Forgive us our trespasses."—The word "trespasses" is translated "debts" in St. Matthew. While "trespass" suggests the doing something wrong, "debt" suggests the leaving something undone. In the description of the Judgment given in St. Matt. xxv. it is entirely for things *not* done that people are condemned. (Let the class look at the passage to verify this.) Notice in the General Confession things left undone are put before things done. (Let the class turn to the place.) As we are far more inclined to remember our wrong acts than to reflect on the kind and good things we might have done, the word "debts" is perhaps the better one to use. But if we realise that a good deed left undone is a sin, then the word "trespass" will mean this to us.

The *condition* of forgiveness ("as we forgive," &c.) is very important. (Let the teacher read aloud slowly, or

write on the board, the shortened form of the Lord's Prayer as given by St. Luke, Revised Version.) Even in this short form the condition is fully stated. Again, it is the one clause in the prayer on which Christ commented, in order to emphasise it. (Read St. Matt. vi. 14, 15.) Perhaps amid all the difficulties in using this prayer, this is the most difficult. Like the man in the parable (St. Matt. xviii. 28) we are so ready to say "Pay me that thou owest," to demand our *rights* from those around us, not only in money and property, but in attention and gratitude and affection. (If this parable is not familiar to the class, it should be told shortly.)

An elder class may be interested to know that in the plays of the greatest of English poets—Shakespeare—those that were written latest of all seem specially to teach the lesson of forgiveness, and to show how sins that seem past all forgiveness are at last forgiven ("Cymbeline," "A Winter's Tale," and "The Tempest").

III. "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."—This prayer is one that Our Lord told His disciples to use, apart from what we call the Lord's Prayer. In the garden of Gethsemane He urged them to pray lest they entered into temptation (St. Luke xxii. 40, 46). It is a great comfort to us that He shows such sympathy with our temptations, knowing how constant they are at *all* times of our life, and in all circumstances. There are special temptations when we are rich, and special ones when we are poor, and again special ones for those who think they have escaped both these extremes. There are special temptations at school, special ones again when we start a more independent life, and fiercer ones still as we grow older. There is no escape for anybody. Indeed, it would seem that the more any one advances spiritually, the harder are the temptations he has to meet. But never let us for a moment think that a temptation is wrong in itself—it is a trial of our strength, a test of character, which makes us stronger every day to meet some supreme test.

Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil side.
Then it is the brave man chooses, while the coward stands aside,
Doubting in his abject spirit, till his Lord is crucified.

Then why should we pray to be kept from temptation? Because of its extreme danger. We pray to be either kept from it, or delivered from the sin of yielding to it. Let the class turn to the Litany and find the enlarged paraphrase of this prayer, "From all evil and mischief," &c., and succeeding suffrages.

The Explanation in the Catechism, strangely enough, does not mention the great condition of forgiveness—(let the scholars name it)—but is fuller on the last clause. Let the class read it and notice the old word "ghostly" for "spiritual"; and that "evil" is understood to include sin, wickedness (or habitual sin), the Devil, and everlasting death; and also *bodily* dangers.

IV. "Amen."—Call special attention to the beautiful expansion of this word in the Explanation.

V. The Doxology is not in the best manuscripts of St. Matthew's Gospel (see R.V.), and was not used in our Prayer-book till 1661, and is not given in the Catechism.

VI. The Lord's Prayer in Private Devotion.—It may be suggested to the class that the Lord's Prayer can be used as a model for private prayer in this way: one clause said, and then a few moments' thought about its meaning, and prayers in our own words on the subject. For instance, "Thy kingdom come," followed by a prayer for a special missionary work, or for a friend whom we wish to bring in, or for our own clergyman and parish. Or again, "Forgive us our trespasses" may be followed by confession. In this way we can follow Our Lord's command, "after this manner pray ye," and shall not be so likely to depart from the *order* of our petitions.

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Write an essay on Bread, showing how God *gives* it to us, from the ground in which it grows, to the strength to make the loaf.
2. Read St. Matt. xviii. 21-35.
3. Write from memory the last part of the Explanation, "And this I trust . . ."
4. Write out the clause of the Litany: "That it may please Thee to give us true repentance . . ." Find a clause where we pray for those under temptation.
5. Read St. James i. 2, 3, 12.

LESSON XLV

What a Sacrament is

Introduction.—To-day we reach the last chapter or division of the Catechism, the part that teaches about the sacraments. We will first look at this chapter as a whole. Let the class open their books.

I. The First Part of the Catechism Complete.—If we turn over the pages of the Catechism we notice that each question arises naturally from the one before it, so that the Creed, the Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer all seem to flow from asking a person his name. (Give the class time to observe this.) But when we come to the sacraments there is a break and a fresh beginning. Nothing has been said about them in the earlier part. How is this accounted for? (The class may remember that the last part was written at a later time.) Yes, the first part, down to the end of the explanation of the Lord's Prayer, is complete in itself as far as it goes. It was evidently put together or set forth by one man and was intended to be worded simply enough for young children to understand. We must not suppose that Dean Nowell (or whoever it was who compiled it) thought the sacraments of less importance, but considered the teaching about them rather too difficult. We must remember that children of three hundred years ago were not taught so much as they are to-day. So all through the reign of Elizabeth the boys and girls only had this first part of the Catechism to learn. Tell me some of these boys (Shakespeare, Bacon, Raleigh, Drake, Sidney, Spenser).

II. How the Last Part came to be Written.—When these boys were grown up and Queen Elizabeth died, who came to the throne? Now King James was not very well known to the English people and they wondered what he would be like. They knew that his mother had been a Roman Catholic, and the people who adhered to the Pope were in high hopes that James would restore the National Church to Papal allegiance. The Puritans, on the other hand, knew that James had been educated in Scotland by people of Puritan views, and so they hoped that he would alter the Prayer-book to suit *their* views. They, therefore, begged the king to hold a conference to discuss the matter. And accordingly a meeting was held at Hampton Court. It turned out that James was a staunch supporter of the Church of England, and he would not hear of the changes proposed in the Prayer-book, dismissing the conference abruptly on the third day. The only alteration of any importance that he allowed was an *addition to the Catechism* on the doctrine of the sacraments. In this matter King James showed much wisdom; in the first place he chose a wise man to make the addition to the Catechism, curiously enough another Dean of St. Paul's, named Overall; and, secondly, he gave Dean Overall instructions that the addition was to be "in the fewest and plainest affirmative terms that may be." The king knew that the subject of sacraments was a difficult one, so that is why he ordered the words to be few, plain, and affirmative. (Ask the class what "affirmative" means, and why the king required this: it may be pointed out that it is not much use to describe or define a thing by saying what it is *not*; especially in the matter of the sacraments; this would lead to a great deal of confusion and disputed points.)

III. How the King's Instructions were Carried Out. As we go on to study these questions and answers we shall notice how wonderfully well Dean Overall carried out the king's orders. A few points we notice at a first glance. (Let the class count the questions.) All the information is conveyed in twelve quite *short*

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questions and answers. So the words were few. Are they *plain*? (Let the class search for any difficult words; there are none.) Are they affirmative? They are peculiarly so; everything stated is definite and certain. Call attention to a few of the phrases—*e.g.* grace is *given*, we are *assured* of it, we *are hereby made*, benefits which *we receive*, *verily and indeed*. From beginning to end there is no word of doubt or condition, no may or might, no if or but.

IV. The Word "Sacrament."—The one new word that requires explanation is, of course, the word "sacrament" itself. Let the class now close their books and write down from memory the answer to "What meanest thou by this word sacrament?" (If they appear to have forgotten, or never to have memorised it before, encourage them to explain the word in their own way.) If we define it as "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace" and stop there, we include a great many "signs" that are not sacraments. Give, and get from the class, as many illustrations as possible—*e.g.* shaking hands is an outward sign of a spiritual thing—good feeling; flag flying at half-mast—sign of mourning; also black clothes; peal of bells—sign of rejoicing; sword laid on a man's shoulder by the king confers knighthood, &c.; the ring at a wedding.

In a sense these are truly all sacraments; in fact, the word at one time meant nothing more than some solemn obligation or sacred offering; when a Roman soldier enlisted he took a solemn oath of allegiance, and this was called a sacrament. In the early centuries of the Church the word was used quite vaguely. St. Augustine calls it "a sign of a sacred thing"; and it was used for a variety of ceremonies, such as blessing holy water and dedicating a church. A writer of the twelfth century names no fewer than thirty sacraments of the Christian faith. Later on the Church limited the number to seven. (Perhaps the class can name some of these: Baptism, the Lord's Supper, Confirmation, penance, extreme unction, ordination, matrimony.)

V. The Word Limited in Meaning at the Reformation.—At the time of the Reformation the Church of England further limited the word "sacrament" to those which Christ Himself ordained, as recorded in the Gospels. We shall now be able to appreciate better the opening questions of this part of the Catechism. (Let the class open their books.) The first question is not "How many sacraments are there?" but "How many sacraments hath Christ ordained in His Church?" Notice the answer carefully. There are only two *necessary* for *everybody*. Explain the use of the word "generally" here as "for all"; compare such a phrase as being held in general esteem—that is, the esteem of all (cf. 2 Sam. xvii. 11 and Jer. xlviii. 38); this is one of the words in the Catechism that has somewhat changed its meaning.

VI. Definition in the Catechism.—Now let the class take their own attempts at definition and compare with the next answer. Every word in this answer is important, and it tells us a great deal about the true meaning of a sacrament, which we shall appreciate better when we have studied the whole chapter. In learning it by heart we must pay special attention to the words "given unto us," "a means," and "a pledge." In Baptism, as we have seen, and in the Lord's Supper, as we shall see later on, grace or help is *given* freely to us. Further, the help is given by *means* of the outward part. And again this outward part of the sacrament is a *pledge*, or token, or security to us that the gift is made. Let the class illustrate, if possible, the meaning of a token—*e.g.* Elijah's mantle (2 Kings ii. 13) assured Elisha of the gift of prophecy; Moses' rod assured the Israelites of victory (Ex. xvii. 9); Pharaoh's ring was a sign to Joseph of his power in Egypt (Gen. xli. 42).

VII. The Christian Life a Sacramental One.—Although the Catechism limits the sacraments that are *necessary for all* to two, it by no means says that there are no others. Life is full of sacraments in the wide sense of the word—every meal that we take together

Portrait of Bishop Overall.

is a sign or token of friendship. To Christ everything around Him seemed to speak to Him some hidden meaning, and was used to convey some truth. Ask the class to give instances from the parables, such as the seed, the lamb, the coin, the net. Ask also for instances of miracles being accompanied by some outward act; the leper is touched, clay is put on the blind man's eyes; Jairus' daughter is taken by the hand; a few loaves are broken and distributed.

As far as we can judge Christ's view of everything was sacramental—a "seeing into the life of things," as the poet Wordsworth calls it. It is important to remember this, because some sects of Christians have discarded sacraments altogether, as not being spiritual enough. We believe, however, that God is the maker of all things, visible and invisible, body as well as soul, and the more we see Him in the visible things around us, surely the more spiritually minded we become. The very fact of Christ taking a human body—the Incarnation as we call it—was a sacrament. The Catechism seeks to emphasise the supreme importance of the two sacraments of the Gospel—Baptism and the Lord's Supper—and these two have always been held supreme from the earliest ages of the Church. The first marks off the members of the Church from the rest of the world, as St. Paul said to the Corinthians: "Ye were washed, ye were sanctified, ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the spirit of our God." The second supports their life, as we shall go on to try to understand in the next lessons.

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Write out from memory the definition of a sacrament in the Catechism; underline the most important words.
2. Name a few sacramental acts of everyday life.
3. Write a short note on how the last part of the Catechism came to be written.

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—Read an account of the Hampton Court Conference in any good history of England. Be prepared to answer any question as to the *necessity* of baptism by studying St. Paul's marvellous conversion, *followed by baptism;* also the Apostle's simple words to the jailer (Acts xvi. 31), *followed by baptism.*

LESSON XLVI

The Lord's Supper in the Church

Introduction.—As we studied the subject of Baptism in our earlier lessons, we will pass on to the second Sacrament that is "generally necessary," or necessary for us all—the one which is called pre-eminently *the* Sacrament. The Church has existed for nearly two thousand years. Take any time or period you like to name in these twenty centuries, and you find that wherever there is a group of Christians, their religious life centres round a ceremony in which they present before God, and eat together, *bread* and *wine*. In the next few lessons we will try to understand a *little* of the meaning of this ceremony. Like the Lord's Prayer, it is exceedingly simple, and yet so full of meaning that no one has been able to grasp all that it signifies.

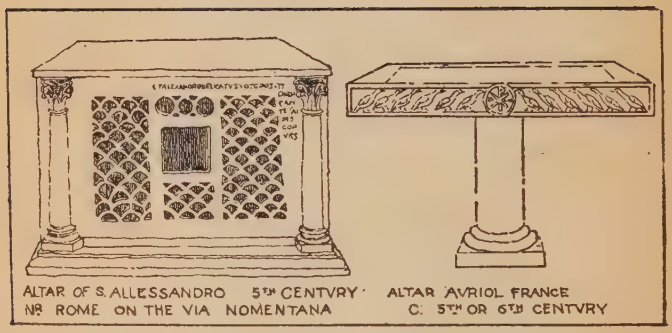
Before we study its inner meaning, let us first of all look at its outward aspect—the various ways in which the ceremony has been carried out.

I. How the Sacrament was First Ordained.—To begin at the very beginning, let us bring before our minds the evening when Christ ordained this Sacrament in His Church. Let the class tell all they can, and gradually build up a picture in their minds of the scenes and events of Maundy Thursday. We have very full details, both from the Gospels and from our knowledge of Jewish customs. Draw from the class and tell where necessary: how Peter and John left Bethany early in the day to "make ready the Passover." This would include buying and cooking the lamb—putting wine, fruit, and bread

on the table—preparing lamps, water, and towels for washing, &c. The large upper room was needed to hold the number—thirteen—and to secure privacy: these upper rooms were not observable from the street, and could be reached by an outer staircase, thus avoiding the necessity of passing through the house: remember that Christ was being watched and hunted: He would be seized the moment He could be found away from the multitude: hence His arrival late in the evening. Notice His intense anxiety to share this meal with the disciples before Judas should betray Him (St. Luke xxii. 15).

This Passover feast of the Jews was sacramental all through. (Revise here the wider meaning of a sacrament.) While the whole feast commemorated the deliverance from Egypt, each kind of food was a sign of some special thing—*e.g.* bitter herbs reminded them of the bitter bondage in Egypt; the salad of mixed fruit represented the materials with which they made the bricks; the unleavened bread (made without yeast, and therefore not requiring time to rise) represented the haste of their departure; the plate of bread was held up with the words, "This is the bread of misery which our fathers ate in the land of Egypt." The roasted lamb was, of course, the centre of the feast, and the solemn question "What meaneth this service?" was answered before the lamb was tasted.

It was amid a meal of this nature, religious throughout, and rendered infinitely more solemn on this occasion by the approaching death of Christ, "the Lamb of God," that He took bread and wine, and gave them a new meaning. (Here let the class read *to themselves* St. Luke xxii. 19, 20.) Notice these points: that He consecrated the bread with certain words, called "blessing" (by St. Matthew and St. Mark) or "giving thanks" (by St. Luke and St. Paul): then it was broken: then given to the disciples with the sacred words we all know so well, "Take, eat, this is My body": then shared and eaten by all. In the same manner with the cup of wine. Then followed the command that the



Ancient Altars

Apostles were to do the same thing themselves "until He come." Everything concurs to assure us that these acts of Christ were of importance beyond expression. How has the Church obeyed His command to perpetuate them?

II. The Lord's Supper in the Earliest Times.—We have a few glimpses in the New Testament of the way in which the Church kept Christ's command. Let the class look at Acts ii. 42, 46. Immediately after the great Day of Pentecost, they celebrate the "breaking of bread" daily. Of course there were no separate buildings to meet in at that time; they held their meetings in one house after another of the richer brethren who owned houses; such as the mother of Mark (Acts xii. 12). There was no doubt at first a common meal, in addition to the sacramental bread and wine, so that the poorer members were in this way assisted. As soon as the numbers increased, this daily meal or "ministration" became difficult to arrange, and special men were ordained to help the Apostles (Acts vi. 1-4). Later on, when the Church had spread to other towns and other countries, the daily reunion became impossible. Meals, however, were given by richer Christians, to cultivate brotherly love, and to help the poorer. Such a meal was called a "Love-feast," or "Agape," and was followed by the Sacrament. Ask the class what day was usually chosen for the early Christians to meet, after the *daily* meeting had perhaps become impossible for all. Refer to Acts xx. 7. Obviously many had to go to work during the "Lord's day"; hence perhaps the reason for holding the service late at night, as in this instance, or in the early morning hours. The Sacrament soon had to be separated from the Love-feast. Perhaps the class can suggest the reason. (The teacher should know 1 Cor. xi. 20-34, so as to be able to tell the class the main points of it.) From very early times, then, we gather that the Sacrament was celebrated in the quiet hours before the stress of day began—originally perhaps for safety and privacy, or for convenience because of work, or for greater reverence.

III. The Catechumens not Admitted.—Now let us look a few hundred years later. Recall to the class the different divisions of the catechumenate (Lesson I.); how some were *dismissed* before the prayers, and how *all* the unbaptized were dismissed before the Lord's Supper was celebrated. We see how the Sacrament was regarded as the most sacred part of the Christian service. Compare with the present day, when only the confirmed are allowed to communicate. Notice the word "dismissed": the full members were also *dismissed* at the close of the Sacrament. (The Latin words were: "Ite, missa est.") It is supposed that this dismissal gave the name to the whole service, which came to be called the "Missa," or "Mass." (Refer to the words Christmas, Michaelmas.)

IV. Ceremonial of the Middle Ages.—Let us pass on again to one of the beautiful cathedrals of the Middle Ages; here we shall find this same service being celebrated with every possible accompaniment that may lend beauty, grandeur, and awe to the service: elaborately robed priests, illuminated "missals" (or service-books), music, lights, incense, the chanting of choirs. What language is used? Latin, whether in St. Peter's at Rome, or in Cologne Cathedral, or in Westminster Abbey, or Old St. Paul's, or Durham Cathedral.

V. To-day in England.—Now let us think of the present day in our own country and our own parish.

[*Note.*—Much will depend here on whether the class have attended the Communion Service. The following description must be adapted to circumstances.]

Let the teacher describe the last Eucharist he attended, Sunday or week-day, the quiet of the early morning hour, the number of worshippers, the robed priest, the consecration of the bread and wine, the distribution to the people kneeling at the altar-rails, the dismissal. *Or*, let one of the class describe a choral service that he has attended. *Or*, let the teacher describe any celebration he has attended or heard of that was unusual in any particu-

lar, such as in a remote country district, in a sick room, on board ship, in a hospital, in a cathedral.

VI. In Difficult Circumstances.—Sometimes missionaries are hard put to it to celebrate the service in the way they would wish. The church is perhaps only a log hut. The altar on one occasion was a wooden packing-case in which apples had been imported. Once on the eve of a battle a Communion was held, with a large drum used for the Holy Table, covered by the colours of the regiment as an altar-cloth. The longest railway in the world—the Trans-Siberian—runs a car in the train fitted as a little church, so that the passengers may attend service on the long journey. But the central beauty of the service—the presence of Our Lord—is the same when it is celebrated in such mean circumstances or in a grand cathedral. (The high altar of St. Mark's at Venice is made of precious stones; this or some other highly ornate altar should be contrasted with the simple ones; pictures should be shown if obtainable.)

Perhaps the most striking and pathetic of all Communion Tables were the tombs of the martyrs, the stone slabs in the Catacombs that covered the graves.

VII. Christ's Command at All Times Obeyed.—It would be impossible to describe the variety of ways in which the Lord's command has been obeyed: variety of ceremonial, from great elaboration to excessive simplicity: variety in the hour of the day chosen for it, &c. We must not judge others and be too ready to criticise their methods of worship: the great point is that each one of us is bound to carry out Christ's command: "Do this," so that it shall be unceasingly obeyed.

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Make a careful drawing of the Communion Table in your own church.

2. Describe any Communion Table you have seen, or heard about, that interests you.

3. Find some other names for the "Lord's Supper."

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—Make a careful drawing beforehand on a large sheet of paper of your own Communion Table, marking any symbols and their meaning, so as to get the utmost work from the class in connection with it.

LESSON XLVII

The Lord's Supper a Thanksgiving

[*Note.*—During this and the succeeding lessons on the Lord's Supper a close connection has been made between the ideas suggested and the words of the Liturgy. It is hoped that in this way association in future years will help to impress the teaching; and also that the service will be followed more intelligently by those about to be confirmed.]

Introduction.—We have seen how Christ's command has been obeyed all down the ages—in different ways. We must now try to approach the *meaning* of the Sacrament. Every time we worthily receive the Holy Communion we grow to understand more about it, but its meaning is quite inexhaustible. Nevertheless we can study a few points together that *prepare* our minds to understand more. There are three aspects which we can consider in the next three lessons—taking the easiest first, the Sacrament as a Thanksgiving; then the Sacrament as a Commemoration or Offering; then the deepest meaning—the Sacrament as a Communion.

I. The First Eucharist was Joyful.—Ask the class for any name given to the great Christian service besides "the Lord's Supper": we have already used the words "breaking of bread," "Holy Communion": it is also called the "Eucharist." This last is the Greek word for thanksgiving. (Let the teacher, if possible, show the class a Greek Testament with this word in the original of St. Luke xxii. 19. It is the word used by St. Luke in the passage: "He took bread, and *gave thanks* . . ." Also by St. Paul in 1 Cor. xiv. 16.) The occasion of the Last Supper, before Christ's death, was inevitably for the disciples one of sorrow and anxiety and distress. And yet the chief feeling that Christ desired to foster in

ordaining the Sacrament is one of thankfulness, joy, and praise. In each account we are told of the *giving of thanks*.

II. The Eucharist in the Early Church was Joyful.—If there is one word more characteristic of Christianity than any other it is perhaps "joy." The New Testament is full of it. (The class may be able to quote some passages.) Joy is mentioned second only to love among the fruits of the Spirit. (Let class turn to Gal. v. 22.) It was the joyfulness of the early Christians, even during persecution, that struck the Greeks and Romans so forcibly; it was no doubt this that attracted so many converts. They could not but be joyful in their certainty of God being their Father and the risen and ascended Christ being really present with them. This cheerfulness was obvious to all outsiders; but when they met for their own special Christian gatherings it became still more intense. When St. Luke (in Acts ii. 46) says that they "ate their meat with gladness," we can picture them closing the doors as it were on the outside world, and forgetting everything except their sheer delight, pleasure, joy, and thankfulness in their new life, symbolised by the consecrated bread and wine; for this "eating" is doubtless the sacred meal they had in common, concluding with the Sacrament.

III. The Eucharist to-day is Joyful.—It is exactly the same to-day. Let us look at our Communion Service, and see how entirely it is an outburst of joy from beginning to end. Let the class open their Prayer-books and notice that all the first part, from the Lord's Prayer to the end of the "comfortable words," is of the nature of *preparation*. The real service begins with the words: "Lift up your hearts." (Let the class notice them carefully, and the three sentences that follow.) This short introduction is found almost word for word in every Communion Service from the earliest times; and it is traditionally supposed to have originated with the Apostles themselves. The words are evidently meant to convey that we are to forget all worldly thoughts, cares, and worries, and our sins too,

and to raise ourselves into the atmosphere of heaven on earth—viz. God's presence. Compare this opening of the service with the opening of the Lord's Prayer.

IV. Joy Leads to Thanksgiving.—This done, our first desire is to thank Him. Notice next that we feel ourselves lifted up into the company of heaven—with angels and archangels—and we use words that belong to them. (Let the class look at Isa. vi. 2, 3; Rev. iv. 8; Heb. xii. 22, 23.) In these words, called the "Tersanctus" or "Thrice Holy," the *whole congregation joins*, as they do in the Creed and the Confession. Now there are certain days in the Church's year when we are thankful in a very special way. Ask the class what we would wish to thank God for specially at Christmas, Easter, Ascension, Whitsuntide, and Trinity. Then point out the "proper prefaces" that put our thanks into words.

V. The Sacrament Itself a Thank-offering.—Let the class now look at the words spoken to each person when communicating: the one duty pressed upon us is not to be good or loving or forgiving, but to be *thankful*. Next, look at the prayer following the Lord's Prayer; we ask God to accept our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; this means, not our *words* of thanksgiving, but the actual Sacrament itself and us in it; so that the consecrated food is often spoken of as the Eucharist, or the thanksgiving.

VI. The "Gloria in Excelsis."—Lastly we come to the final hymn. Let the class find words of angels again in this (St. Luke ii. 14). It is more human, as an act of praise, than the "Tersanctus," for there are cries for mercy in it. Call attention to the beautiful repetition, "that takest away the sins of the world," as a reason for our thankfulness. It is chiefly addressed to Christ, and the great Christian service ends in words of simple adoration of the Master—asking for nothing. The use of this hymn goes so far back that its exact origin cannot be traced. There is an ancient manuscript of the Bible in the British Museum (fourth or fifth century) with a morning hymn at the end of the Psalms; and this hymn of our Communion Service is a part of it: the germ of it is supposed

to have come from the time of the Apostles. Perhaps we are to-day worshipping Christ with some of the actual words used in that "upper room" where the first disciples met to "break bread." Ask the class why we have Latin names for the "Gloria in Excelsis" and the "Tersanctus" (see Lesson II.).

VII. Thankfulness as a Duty.—Turning now to our Catechism again, let us see if the duty of thankfulness is urged upon us there. (The class should look through the whole before answering.) The words "I heartily thank our heavenly Father" are put into the mouth of the catechumen at the outset. Again, it is a part of my duty towards God "to give Him thanks." Lastly, we are to have "a thankful remembrance of Christ's death" in coming to the Lord's Supper. We must remember that the Catechism was written for young children as well as for those about to be confirmed. It is our duty to give God thanks at all times of our life, and in any way that is natural and sincere—not always perhaps in words, "not only with our lips but in our lives." Refer again to the spirit of cheerfulness that can be cultivated. (Lesson XXXIX.) But as we get older we find more and more how wonderfully the Eucharist expresses our greatest and best thanks: the Proper Prefaces suggest to us that we can thank God for any *special* good in our own lives when we are joining in the "Tersanctus" with the whole company of men and angels. Again, when we are *not* feeling joyful about our private affairs, and may have cause for distress and worry, here in this great service we are lifted out of ourselves, and made to feel that there is *more to make us glad in Christ* than there can possibly be anything to trouble us. As in the Lord's Prayer, the larger thoughts are put before the smaller.

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Write out Heb. xii. 22, 23, 24.
2. Print carefully or illuminate the "Tersanctus," and the first sentence of the "Gloria in Excelsis."

3. Look at the exhortation at the beginning of Morning Prayer, and find out what is our *first* reason for meeting together.

4. Say in your own words why the Lord's Supper is called the Eucharist.

Suggestion for Teacher's Study.—For the joyfulness of early Christianity, see " Conflict of Religions in Early Roman Empire " (Glover).

LESSON XLVIII

The Lord's Supper a Memorial

Introduction.—Why was the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper ordained? Let the class repeat the answer (first half only). Last time we thought of the Lord's Supper as a service of joy and thanksgiving under the name of the Eucharist. To-day we will think of it in quite another way, and by quite a different name. Very early in the history of the Church it was called the "Sacrifice." The word "sacrifice" has been used in a variety of ways, and the whole subject is a difficult one; but we will try to get one or two clear ideas about it to-day.

I. The Word "Sacrifice."—Invite the class to give any meanings to the word that they have met with: suggest the Old Testament, heathen religions, modern use in conversation, &c. The following answers may be forthcoming: an animal killed on an altar; anything offered to God; something done for others at great cost to ourselves. In itself the word simply means a "making holy." Get some illustrations of sacrifice from the class by a few leading questions—*e.g.* the Lamb of the Passover; the goat and the bullock on the great Day of Atonement (Lev. xvi.); the ram caught in the thicket (Gen. xxii. 13); the turtle-doves at Our Lord's Presentation (St. Luke ii. 24); Elijah's sacrifice on Mount Carmel; or in heathen nations some of the class may know the story of Iphigenia; or of the Druidical sacrifices; or of the Roman (see Acts xiv. 13).

The origin of sacrifices is lost in antiquity, and it seems to be a universal instinct among all religions and races and times. Perhaps it is due to the deep-rooted feeling that we *must* suffer for one another, that it is a law of our existence, and that it is right that it should be so.

This widespread and deep-rooted idea found complete expression in the death of Christ on the Cross. This was the great sacrifice to which all others, both Jewish and heathen, pointed. It is this sacrifice that we commemorate in the Lord's Supper. Let us see in what way we commemorate it.

II. The Word "Remembrance."—Now here is another word that needs attention. We say we *commemorate* Christ's sacrifice: what does that mean? We usually mean by commemoration the bringing of some fact to our own and our neighbours' minds; thus we commemorate Trafalgar Day by decorating Nelson's Column; we keep the memory of it fresh in our minds and impress it on others. But this is not all the meaning of the word "remembrance," when Christ said "Do this in remembrance of Me." The Lord's Supper was not ordained to remind *us* of Christ's death, nor to show it forth to those who are not Christians; it was to be a memorial *before God*. The bread and wine are offered *to God*, made holy, or sacrificed, to signify *to God* that we trust in Christ's death, and in that only, as our salvation. We shall see this more clearly if we look at the Communion Service. But in order to understand this part of the service we must first for a moment consider:

III. The Work of the Priest.—It is important to notice that in any Church service the priest is doing one of two things: he is either speaking to God, as the representative or mouthpiece of the whole Church; or he is speaking to the people as the representative or mouthpiece of God. (*See that the class are clear on this point*; let them look at "Morning Prayer" and say which of these two the priest is doing when he says the Confession, the Absolution.) Let the class open their books at the Communion Service and have plenty of time to decide whether the priest is addressing God for the people, or the people for God, in the following: the Commandments; the offertory sentences; "Ye that do truly"; the Confession; the Absolution; the Comfortable Words; the "Tersanctus"; the prayer of Humble Access (the rubric before this should be noticed). These parts of the Service may be put on

the black-board in a column, with the answer opposite each.

IV. The Prayer of Consecration.—We now reach the culminating point or climax of the whole service—the prayer of Consecration. Let the class read it over slowly to themselves, in order to find out which duty the priest is performing: is he speaking *to God* as the mouthpiece of the Church, or is he giving us a message *from God*? They will probably conclude that it is the former; but it should be further impressed on them that the *latter* part is also addressed to God, and is not intended to teach or remind the people of what Our Lord did. The priest is expressing before God that we rely on Christ's full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice; and that we are carrying out Christ's command in offering up the broken bread and the poured-out wine.

[*Note.*—The word *oblation* (=offering) is used here of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, and in the prayer for the Church militant it is used of the bread and wine, the bread and wine being regarded as an offering to God.]

V. The Whole Church says "Amen."—One of the most solemn moments in the Service is the saying "Amen" to this prayer: in saying it we all take our part in "showing the Lord's death": it is the voice of the whole Church, and not merely the congregation then present. (Let the class read the opening sentence of the first prayer after Communion, noticing the words "we and all Thy whole Church.") We know that this "Amen" was considered an important part of the service in the time of the Apostles (read 1 Cor. xiv. 16). The sacrifice is the sacrifice of the whole body of Christians; the priest is the necessary mouth with which the body prays, and the hand by which the body offers the bread and wine, breaking the bread and pouring out the wine as a symbolic action before God. We must always bear in mind at the Communion Service that *we* are doing this, and when we say "Amen" it is like setting our seal to it, or signing it with our names.

VI. Jesus Christ our High-Priest.—The class will

remember that Christ expressly told us to offer prayers in His Name; perhaps they can quote the words of St. John xvi. 23. How do we carry out this command in Morning and Evening Prayer? Let the class turn over the pages and notice the constant ending: "through Jesus Christ Our Lord." (Where such words do not occur, it is because the prayer is addressed to Christ—*e.g.* the prayer of St. Chrysostom, and the Litany.) Where do these words occur in the Catechism? We are taught to trust that God will answer our prayers "through Our Lord Jesus Christ." They are very simple and very familiar words, but they have tremendous meaning. We have just seen that a priest acts as a mouthpiece for us all: now the Church looks upon Christ as the great High-Priest, offering our prayers Himself to the Father. One of the early fathers beautifully says: "As He stands before God, He looks to see with what sort of offering every church and every individual is filling His hands."

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Read Hebrews ii. 9 to iii. 6.
2. Make a list of any six important parts of the Communion Service in a column, and put down opposite each whether the priest is acting as God's mouthpiece or the people's.
3. Learn the first two verses of Hymn 322, A. and M.
4. Find as many places as you can in the Holy Communion Service and in Morning Prayer where the words occur: "through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—"Church Doctrine Bible Truth" (Sadler), chap. iv., sect. vii.; *or* "The Body of Christ" (Gore), chap. iii.; *or* "Prayer-book Worship" (Denison), Lecture V.; *or* Harold Browne on Article XXXI.

The whole of the Epistle to the Hebrews relates to this subject.

LESSON XLIX

The Lord's Supper as a Means of Grace

Introduction.—We have thought about the Lord's Supper as the *Eucharist* or Thanksgiving, and also as a *Memorial* before God of Christ's Sacrifice on the Cross. To-day we must think of it in another way—as a great *Gift* from God to us. Let the class repeat the answer to: "Why was the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper ordained?" It is these "benefits" that are God's gift. In the General Thanksgiving it is called a "means of grace." (Let the class refer to this.) "Means of grace" is only another way of saying a "method of helping us."

I. God's Gift is Himself.—What are the benefits we receive? What is God's method of helping us? What is the gift? The Body and Blood of Christ, or, in other words, the life of God Himself is imparted to us under the form of bread and wine. (Let the class read to themselves the prayer of Humble Access in order that their minds may dwell upon the fact.) *How* this can be it is very difficult to understand. It was so to the disciples. (Read aloud St. John vi. 51, 60, 66.) As you know, controversies have raged round the difficulty all through the ages. But Christ did not command us to understand something or explain something, but to *do* something. The promise is quite clear that if we receive the consecrated bread and wine, believing that Christ died for us, we shall be *thereby* given Christ's Body and Blood. Notice the plain wording of the Catechism in the answer to "What is the inward part, or thing signified?' What word in this answer shows us that the Sacrament does not act like a charm, or magically, on any one who receives it? The inward part is only received by the

"faithful." The gift is indeed given, but must also be received.

II. The Meaning of the Gift.—The familiar words of St. Paul: "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. xv. 22), help us to understand the Sacrament. The coming of Christ gave mankind a fresh start; He not only died for us, but enables us to share continually in His full and glorious manhood, so that we may become more and more like Him. He is not only our example by His sinless life on earth in the far past. We all know that a sinless example is not enough; it might even make us hopeless of ever attaining to it. But He is not only outside us as an example, but *inside* us as a living force, shaping us into His own likeness.

If sin, like a poison, has got into our race and runs through it all down the ages (or, as St. Paul puts it, in Adam all die)—and this is a fact disputed by none—it is not difficult or against reason to think of the second Adam, the Great Physician, healing and gradually curing the effects of this poison by feeding us with His own triumphant and sinless life.

III. How it is Given.—Remind the class of the two parts or duties undertaken by the priest in church. We saw last time how, in the solemn recitation of the prayer of Consecration, the priest represents, speaks, and acts for the whole Church. After this he turns to the people to speak and act for God. There is no moment more solemn in the whole service. We can forget the priest and imagine that it is Christ Himself placing the Sacramental bread and wine in our hands, as He did to the disciples in the upper room. Every phrase in the short sentences said to us is full of meaning. Let the class open their books at the Holy Communion Service, and look at the words spoken to each person on communicating, and consider the following points: What is the bread now called? What words make the Sacrament individual and personal? "Thee," "thy." What word implies that our *whole* being belongs to Christ? *Body* and soul. Why should the next sentence be added? (Let

the class read to themselves "Take and eat this . . .") It is a direct reminder to each of us that we have a part to play, that we must have faith, or, as the Catechism says, be faithful. While God gives, we must will to receive.

IV. The Communion.—It is this part of the service that gives the name "Communion" to the whole. Let the class express what they mean by the word "Communion." It is taken from the words used by St. Paul in writing to the Corinthians. (Let all refer to 1 Cor. x. 16.) It may be expressed as a "joint sharing" or a "common participation in" the Body of Christ. This is a very important passage in St. Paul's writings, for it clearly states that the Church is one body solely from the fact that each member is a part of Christ or is in communion with Christ. We know quite well how difficult it is for men to love one another. Christ did not *merely* tell us to do so, but He is working daily for this great end by continually binding each one of us closer and closer to Himself, so that through Him we become united to one another.

V. Holy Communion and Baptism.—The question may here arise: "But we were made members of Christ in our baptism; is not that sufficient?" We were at our baptism separated from the world, joined to Christ, "grafted" into the Vine. But we also need, like the branch, a continuous supply of new life. Life is the gift of God in our baptism, at our Confirmation, in our Communion; but in each case suited to our growing needs. He Who made us one with Himself in baptism gives us His spirit in Confirmation and renews His Presence in Holy Communion.

VI. The Fellowship of Communicants.—Although the word "Communion" means chiefly our sharing the life of Christ, we must not lose sight of the fact that we *all* partake of it together in a common meal. This has been the greatest means of uniting Christians. A common meal, in all ages and countries, has something sacramental about it; people eat together not only to satisfy their hunger, but to enjoy each other's society and to show their friendship; a common meal is a symbol

of brotherhood and mutual service. At some public banquets this is specially symbolised by the passing round of a "loving cup," from which each guest drinks, using special words of commemoration as he does so.

Remind the class of the lesson on the Communion of Saints. Christ "knew what was in man," that is, He knows what human nature is and appeals to its highest instincts. He uses this common meal to unite us, and to remind us continually of His ideal for us. At His Table we forget all our differences (such as those of social class or worldly standing, of education or opinion) and feel only our brotherhood in Him. Thus every time that we partake of the Holy Communion we are actually adding to the strength of the article in our Creed: "I believe in the Communion of Saints."

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Learn Hymn 318, A. and M.
2. Read St. John vi.
3. Write out from memory the answer to the question, What is the inward part or thing signified?
4. Draw a chalice and a paten.
5. Learn Ps. cxvi. 12-16.
6. Copy the words: "The nearest way to each man's heart is round by Heaven."
7. Write down the words spoken by the minister on delivering the bread to anyone.
8. Illuminate or print the following lines by Christina Rossetti:

God, the Father, give us grace
To walk in the light of Jesus' face.
God, the Son, give us a part
In the hiding-place of Jesus' heart.
God, the Spirit, so hold us up
That we may drink of Jesus' cup.

LESSON L

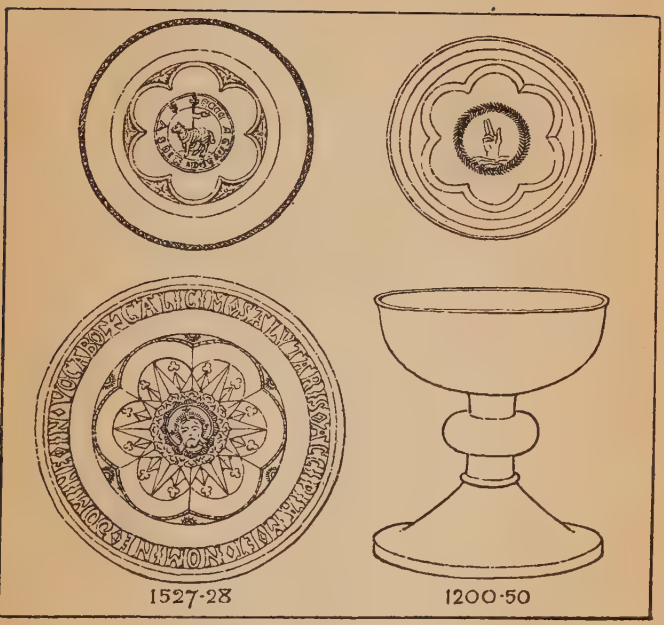
The Guests at the Lord's Table

Introduction.—Revise by brief questions the *main* points about the Lord's Supper that have been studied in the last three lessons. We have now to consider the *guests* at the Lord's Table, who they are, and how they prepare themselves to come.

I. Sinners are Invited by Christ.—Ask the class to think of the people in their own parish; how would they describe those who come to the Communion, as opposed to those who do *not*? If, as is most probable, one or more suggest that they are the "good" people in the parish, use this answer to draw attention to a common mistake. The Lord's Supper was never intended for a select few. As soon as any one was baptized in early times he came to the Eucharist. You remember how the candidates for baptism were dismissed before this service began; but we do not hear of a large proportion of the *baptized* going away! If we all waited till we were *good* enough to come, we should all stay away.

Let the teacher here recall to the class some passages from the Gospels that show us how Our Lord associated with people who were considered sinful and low (*e.g.* Matthew, Mary Magdalene, Zacchæus); how He was blamed for doing so by the respectable Pharisees; how He spoke parable after parable to express His desire to save the wicked. His severest rebukes were given to those who considered themselves good (*e.g.* St. Matt. xxiii.). It is not, then, sinners who are out of place at Holy Communion, but those satisfied to remain in their sinful condition—the unrepentant, who feel no desire to amend.

II. The Invitation.—Now let us turn to the



PATENS AND CHALICE.

Communion Service, and see how our Prayer-book reflects the mind of Christ as shown us in the Gospels. There is one part called the "Invitation." Let the class find this; and notice *who* are invited. The first words are "Ye that do truly and earnestly repent you of your *sins*."

III. The Comfortable Words, which follow the Absolution, are an additional proof that the presence of people who feel themselves sinners is expected. (Let the class turn to these.) There is no doubt, then, that the Communion is not only for the "good" people, but for all sinners who are sorrowful and heavy laden by reason of their sin.

IV. The Faithful.—Again, the Lord's Supper is not intended only for those who have plenty of time and leisure, or for those whose calling in life does not subject them to fierce temptations. As we have seen, no one is free from temptation. Let us look at the third answer from the end of the Catechism: here we find the expression "the faithful." What does this mean? It is only a name for all baptized persons, all Church people, all members of Christ. The Church, then, has never contemplated any exceptions.

V. Continual Remembrance. — Neither does the Church contemplate attendance at the Lord's Supper as an *occasional* thing, or as an *extra* service. It is intended to be *the* service of the Lord's Day. Let the class turn over the pages of their Prayer-books and notice that there is a special Collect, Epistle, and Gospel for every Sunday in the year, and that these are part of the Communion Service. Draw their attention to the words of the Catechism, "the *continual* remembrance."

VI. Continual Support.—Now let us look at the last answer but one in the Catechism. Our souls are supported by the Sacrament, just as our bodies are by food. It would never do for our bodies to be fed only occasionally, at irregular intervals, or merely when convenient. Neither is it good for our souls.

In this connection lead the class to see that the two words "strengthening" and "refreshing" convey two distinct ideas. Just as bread supports and wine cheers,

our souls are *supported* and *cheered* each Sunday for the work and trials of the coming week.

VII. Preparation for Communion.—Ask the class to read carefully to themselves the last answer in the Catechism. Point out that examining themselves does not mean answering a number of set questions in a perfunctory way, but an honest attempt to call our actions and our motives by their right names, to try to see ourselves as God sees us. Then we must steadfastly purpose to keep on trying, to trust that God will help us, to feel grateful to Him, and . . . What is the last requirement? *To be in charity with all men.*

VIII. The Great Ideal of Christianity.—These last few words of the Catechism bring us to the very summit of Christian life. The duty of loving our neighbour is a difficult one; we are all agreed about that. But it becomes quite possible and practicable, and even unavoidable, if we look at people as Christ looked at them. He loved people actively, with the liveliest interest, with *enthusiasm.* You do not feel that He is patient and pitying, enduring and long-suffering, but rather a Friend, a Brother, an energetic giver of Himself, happy and rejoicing in the Society He has founded to spread over the world, His own kingdom, His own pearl of great price. It is this enthusiasm of love for one another which we kindle when we come to worship Him together at Holy Communion. Nothing can remind us more strikingly than this Sacrament "that we are very members incorporate in His mystical body." (Let the class find these words.) It is this idea of brotherhood and enthusiastic love which ought to occupy our minds at Holy Communion rather than our *individual* sins and wants and even thanksgivings. In this way, too, the Communion Service is like the Lord's Prayer—the kingdom of God comes first, and our own special needs afterwards. As we receive this Holy Sacrament again and again, this way of looking at things will become easier to us till at last it becomes habitual. We cannot always, of course, feel as enthusiastic in our every-day life as we do at these times, but this must not discourage us. The moments

when we really do see and feel things rightly, and are "in charity with all men," help us to *act* rightly when the seeing and feeling is weaker; as a flash of lightning shows us the path in the dark.

> Tasks in hours of insight will'd
> Can be through hours of gloom fulfill'd.

IX. Christ's Continual Help.—In Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" there is a short parable that is well worth remembering. The Interpreter shows Christian a place where a fire is burning against a wall, and one standing by it, always casting much water upon it to quench it: yet did the fire burn hotter and hotter. Christian then asks the meaning of this. The Interpreter explains that the one who would put the fire out is the devil, the fire being the good desires and splendid enthusiasms of our hearts; but it gets brighter in spite of the water. Then the Interpreter takes Christian to the back of the wall, where he sees a man *secretly* and *continually* pouring in oil. "'Then,' said 'Christian, 'What means this?' The Interpreter answered: 'This is Christ, Who continually with the oil of His grace maintains the work already begun in the heart; by the means of which, notwithstanding what the devil can do, the souls of His people prove gracious still.'"

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Read the Parable of the Marriage Supper (St. Matt. xxii.) and say what *you* think the "wedding-garment" means.

2. Learn the Collect for Quinquagesima, and read again 1 Cor. xiii. in connection with it.

3. Read 1 John iii. and iv., and say in your own words what is the chief point that St. John is emphasising.

4. Copy the following: "Let the counsel of thine own heart stand: for there is no man more faithful unto thee than it. For a man's mind is sometimes wont to tell him more than seven watchmen, that sit above in an high tower. And above all this pray to the most High, that He will direct thy way in truth." (Ecclesiasticus xxxvii. 13-15.)

SPECIAL LESSON FOR CHRISTMAS DAY

Note to the Teacher.—On Christmas Day the teacher in the middle Sunday school is face to face with a difficulty that demands some consideration. The beautiful Christmas story has been told and retold to the boys and girls ever since they were tiny children; there is always the danger that constant repetition may have dulled the freshness of its interest, and that familiarity may breed indifference. There is also the added danger that the *teacher's* own consciousness of the familiarity of the story—a sense that "the children know it all beforehand and therefore will not be interested"—may communicate itself through speech and manner to the minds of the children and infect them with its suggestion.

Yet, as we adults know, the Christmas story is ever fresh in interest and meaning. The scholars are now a year older than they were a Christmas ago. They can understand and appreciate what they could neither understand nor appreciate a few years back. The Christmas story must itself develop as the children develop. Far more of the Eastern setting—the geographical and historical background—can be given to the middle school scholar than the child in the Sunday kindergarten could either desire or apprehend. The teacher must aim to reawaken his own interest in the Christmas story—and therefore prepare it carefully and well. Then, in the telling, let the teacher not regard the previous knowledge of the children as a hindrance, but as a help. This previous knowledge permits of breaks in the story, as the children are not waiting for incidents and yet they would not like any of the incidents to be taken for granted. At such breaks the teacher may interpose a comment, so that the scholars may both feel that they are "behind the scenes" with the teacher and know what is coming next, and also may be led to *dwell* on the ideas already familiar to their minds; *e.g.* "*They* never guessed that"—"But *we* know that," &c.

[Read St. Luke ii. 1-20.]

Introduction.—Once more we are keeping Christmas Day—the birthday of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have heard the story of that birthday every year ever since

we were tiny children. Since we were tiny children we have looked at the picture of the Baby in the manger, with the sheep and oxen standing by, and heard about the coming of the shepherds. Now we are older, and we still hear the same story; and because we are older, we can understand it better. When we are grown up we shall understand it better still. People call the Christmas story the "old, old, story." Indeed, it is over 1900 years since it was first told—and yet it is a story we always love to hear again and again, for there is always something new in it for us to understand.

I. The Prince of Peace.—Remind the children that long before the birth of Christ the Jews had been looking for a King to be born among them—a Messiah Who would come from God to rule over them and all the world. Every Jewish woman longed to be the mother of that King Who was to come. Long years before, a great Jewish preacher, the prophet Isaiah, had spoken of Him. He had preached to the Jews of the Child Who should be born and what He would be like. "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace" (Isaiah ix. 6).

We remember, too, how before our Lord was born the Angel Gabriel had brought Mary the same message: "Behold, thou shalt bring forth a son and shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest, and of His kingdom there shall be no end." But many of the Jews had forgotten that the King Who was to come was to be a Prince of Peace, and not a Prince of War. The King they were expecting was to be rich and powerful and great. They thought He would reign in a palace of Jerusalem, and lead forth victorious armies to conquer all the nations of the world. They were not at all prepared for the King to be born in a stable—for His mother to be a poor woman, or for Him to grow up in a carpenter's shop. And at the particular time when the Lord Jesus came, the Jews were specially wanting a king, because, as the children will remember, they had been conquered by the Romans,

and had no king of their own—"No king but Cæsar." So when the Baby Jesus was born, no one guessed Who He was.

II. Royal David's City.—We remember how Joseph and Mary had come a three days' journey from Nazareth, where they lived, to the village of Bethlehem. Show the position of Bethlehem on the map—five miles from Jerusalem on the side of a semicircle of hills; high up in the clear, dry air of Judea, with olive-groves, vineyards, and pasture-lands around. Once long ago King David had lived there; so it was called in our hymn "Royal David's city." Explain why Joseph and Mary had come to Bethlehem. Everyone at this time was ordered to pay a sum of money to the Roman Emperor—a tax—and for that purpose people must go to the village where their families had lived. Years ago Mary's family had lived in Bethlehem. So it was to Bethlehem that Mary and Joseph came to be taxed.

III. The Inn.—It was very likely in the evening that Mary and Joseph reached Bethlehem and climbed the steep village street. But many other people had been there before them, and every house in the village was full. If there had been any room in one of the houses, Joseph and Mary would certainly not have gone to the village inn, for no one in Palestine would have refused food and shelter to a traveller if there was room or bread within the house. Perhaps Joseph went from house to house asking for lodging for the night, and finding none. At any rate, at last he and Mary were forced to take refuge in *the village inn*, a low, one-storied stone building built round a square enclosure. Describe an Eastern *khan*, or inn—the unroofed courtyard surrounded by the bare and unfurnished rooms, with their raised stone floors—mere shelters in case of rain or sun. The courtyard was intended for the waggons, baggage, camels, horses, &c., of the travellers. Some of the travellers, and perhaps some of their horses and beasts of burden, would find shelter in the rooms round the courtyard. It was a bare, comfortless place—not at all like one of our comfortable inns or hotels of the present day.

No food, no fires, no beds were provided for the travellers; they were expected to bring their own carpets for sleep, their own supply of food, and to draw their own water from the village well. Sometimes, if the inn were built into the side of a hill, extra stables would be hewn out of the solid rock. Travellers paid nothing but a few pence to the innkeeper for the use of the courtyard and the stables round.

IV. The Birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ.—In the inn Mary and Joseph were forced to lodge for the night; but every room seemed to have been occupied by the time they arrived, and they were forced to lie down for the night in one of the stables, "with the sheep and oxen standing by." Here, as we know, our Lord Jesus Christ was born and laid by Mary in one of the mangers.

"Once in royal David's city
Stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her Baby
In a manger for His bed."

Close by the village of Bethlehem, King Herod (the king whom the Romans had placed over Judea) had built a strong castle. But the King of Peace was not born in a castle or in a palace, nor laid in a soft bed; He was born in a bare stable, where the wind could sweep and the stars look down, and His only bed was a manger filled with hay.

V. Shepherds Abiding in the Field.—Now, shall we leave the little town of Bethlehem and go to the country outside, where we know those shepherds were watching over their sheep? All round Bethlehem lay the grassy slopes where the shepherds pastured their sheep. Through the daytime they led their sheep from one green slope to another or took them down to water at some pool or stream. When night came they usually led them up the hillside to the sheepfold, a square enclosure surrounded by a stone wall, with a shed or two inside it for shelter in very bleak weather. When the nights were at all mild and warm (and they sometimes were even in winter in the land of Palestine), the shepherds would

lie down with their sheep on the open hillside. Generally they would light a fire of sticks, both to warm themselves and to frighten away any wild animals who might come near; then they would wrap themselves in their warm cloaks, sit round the fire, and watch and talk.

We remember that it was to some poor shepherds that the message of Christmas was brought. It was not to King Herod in his palace, nor to the High Priest in the Temple, that the wonderful news first came. It was to some shepherds "abiding in the field keeping watch over their flocks by night." Perhaps they were thinking and talking of the King Who was to come. Suddenly, as we know, the Angel of the Lord stood by them, and "the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid." [Let the teacher learn by heart St. Luke ii. verses 8-14, so as to be able to quote them effectively.]

This was the Christmas message, "Unto you a child is born," and this was the Christmas song, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, goodwill towards men."

IV. The Christmas Message.—The shepherds heard the Christmas message and the Christmas song, and hurried back over the hill to Bethlehem. There in the stable of the inn they found Mary and Joseph, and there in the manger lay the new-born Baby—our Lord Jesus Christ. Perhaps the innkeeper wondered why these shepherds hurried in that night to look at a little Baby. Perhaps the shepherds wondered to find the King Who was to come lying in so bare a room. They did not know as we do that the little Baby lying there would grow up to be the Lord Jesus Christ, the Helper and Friend of all men, the Saviour of the world. But they knew that something wonderful and glorious had happened, and so they went back to their work on Christmas Day with hearts full of happiness, "glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen."

And so on Christmas Day we do the same. We glorify and praise God because He so loved the world that He

sent us His only begotten Son to live among us and show us all that God is love.

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK.

I. During the few weeks before Christmas let the teacher and scholars collect and bring to school any pictures, Christmas-cards, &c., illustrating scenes from the Christmas story.* The scholars may then compare and discuss the pictures, but the teacher should suggest that no picture really shows us *what the scene was actually like*; it only shows us what the painter *thought the scene was like*, and what message he wanted to bring to people by the picture he painted.

2. If you were asked to choose a text suitable for a Christmas-card, what text would you choose? Look at St. Luke ii. 1-20; 1 John iv. 9, 10, 14, before you give your answer, and print or illuminate on a card the text chosen.

3. Somewhere in the Service for Holy Communion in your Prayer-books you will find the words of the Christmas song. Search at home for the passage, and show it to your teacher.

* See *Pictures and Illustrations for the Teacher*, Series XV.

SPECIAL LESSON FOR EASTER

Introduction.—You all know that to-day is a great Church festival. Let the class tell all the outward signs witnessed at the morning service, such as decorations, special psalms and hymns, procession, different frontal on the Communion Table. Let them name some other great festivals (Christmas, Epiphany, Whitsun, &c.). Now let the class write down the name of the festival which they consider the greatest of all, and the *reason* why they think so. Their answers will serve as an introduction to the lesson. Probably they will all write down either "Christmas" or "Easter."

I. Christmas and Easter.—The great fact of the Incarnation is the centre of our Creed, and the rock on which the Church was built. Now Christmas is the festival that commemorates this, when Christ took our nature in order to redeem us. So that those of you who regard this as the greatest day have good reason for your choice.

On Easter Day we celebrate Christ's conquest over death. So that we may express it like this: Christmas marks the beginning of the work of redemption, Easter the accomplishment of it. It is certainly difficult to say which is the more important. But it is quite clear that the Church has always looked upon Easter as the greatest day of the year. Early writers refer to it as "the most holy Feast," "the great Day," "the Feast of Feasts," "the Great Lord's Day," and "the Queen of Festivals." Let us see why this has been so.

II. Why Easter is the Greatest Day.—Let us for a moment imagine ourselves among the group of Early Christian teachers, doing our utmost to induce others to join the new society or brotherhood. Suppose we are

in the streets of Jerusalem or Alexandria or Ephesus or Rome, watching the throngs of men passing to and fro, much as they do in an English town to-day. How shall we catch their attention? What shall we say to make them stop and listen to us? Let the class suggest what fact about Jesus they would speak of first and foremost.

Not His *death*, because all men die; and indeed the death on the Cross was so disgraceful that it frequently repelled listeners. Not His *teaching*, because that could not be put shortly. But the great miracle of the Resurrection established as a historical fact by living witnesses—*that* at once arrested everyone's attention. When once that was spoken of men would ask Who He was, why He died, and by what power He rose again. Then they would be taught the great doctrines of the Incarnation and the Atonement—the lessons of Christmas Day and Good Friday. But *first* the Resurrection. Let us look at some of these early sermons of the Apostles and see how they put the Resurrection *first of the facts about Jesus*. Listen to Peter in the streets of Jerusalem (read Acts ii. 32); in the house of Cornelius (x. 40, 41); Paul in the uplands of Asia Minor (xiii. 30, 31); Paul among the learned men of Athens (xvii. 31).

III. The Meaning of Christ's Resurrection.—The Resurrection of Christ was not preached simply as a great miracle or wonder. It meant far more than this. Christ's rising was a pledge of our own rising—a token of our own immortal life. The world seized the glad news (or the "Gospel" as it was called) as a drowning man clings to a rock. It saved man from the terror of death—the dread of the unknown—the lonely shadowy existence which was the utmost hoped for. One of the Greek philosophers had said that death was of all things the most terrible, because it was an *end*. Now to the Christian death is not an end at all. Think how full of meaning some of Our Lord's words must have come to the early converts to Christianity. "I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am there ye may be also"; "He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life"; "I

am the resurrection and the life." Lead the class to see that Christ rose from the dead as the Captain or Head of the whole human race; He conquered death for us all. Call special attention to the words "Because I live, ye shall live also" (St. John xiv. 19), and also to Rev. i. 18. (Read this verse to the class, explaining that "hell" means the place of departed spirits, as in the Creed.) Point out how this verse suggests to us that the Saviour, Who cared for us so much as to die for us, is Lord and Master of our future life, so that our eternity is under the control of some one Who is *all-loving* and *all-powerful.*

IV. Sunday, the Weekly Easter.—We have seen *why* the doctrine of the Resurrection was so important in the Church; let us next see *how* the Church emphasised it. The most striking fact of all is perhaps the establishment of the first day of the week as the "Lord's Day." This was entirely owing to the desire to keep the day of Resurrection every week.

V The Holy Sepulchre.—We do not know at all whether the earliest disciples took any pains to preserve a knowledge of the sites of the holy places of the Crucifixion and the Resurrection Probably the thoughts connected with Calvary would be too painful, but perhaps they regarded the Holy Sepulchre with special love and reverence. We do not know. In any case, the times of persecution and the destruction of Jerusalem would be likely to destroy all traces of any of the sacred sites. But later on we find extraordinary interest taken in the actual places where Our Lord suffered and rose again—especially in the Holy Sepulchre, his burial-place. Constantine, the first Christian Emperor, about three hundred years after Christ, built a church on the traditional site.

VI. Pilgrimages.—To this church pilgrims from all parts of Europe used to go, in order, if possible, to be there for the celebration of Easter. In olden days pilgrimages formed a very important part of the life of the Church. Solemn services were held before the pilgrims started, funds were raised to help them, special laws were passed to protect them, roads were kept in

repair for their benefit; for it was felt that all the members of the Church shared in the blessings won by those who braved so many dangers. (Compare with the interest we *all* take in the life of a missionary to-day.)

VII. Crusades.—It was in order to protect these pilgrims and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre that wars broke out and lasted for hundreds of years between the Christians and the Saracens. Let the class tell all they can about the Crusaders. Their rallying-cry was always "Remember the Holy Sepulchre." Notwithstanding all the wars of the Crusades and the great power of Christian States in modern days, the Turks still possess the Holy Land and Jerusalem.

VIII. Easter the Centre of the Church's Year.—Let the class take their Prayer-books and, turning over the leaves, notice how large a portion of the year centres round Easter. As soon as Epiphany is past, we have our faces turned towards Easter. "Septuagesima" is the Latin word for seventieth. Let the class try to suggest the meaning of this. Point out how Lent prepares for Easter, and Holy Week leads up to it with ever-increasing fervour. The lessons of the Resurrection are continued all through the "great forty days" till Ascension Day.

IX. Easter and Holy Communion.—Finally, let the class turn to the last rubric but one at the close of the Communion Service. Call attention to the grand ideal of the Church that *all* the members should communicate on this great day. Impress on the class the duty of every one who has been confirmed to follow this rule of the Church throughout their lives.

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Illuminate the ancient salutation of Christians on Easter Day: "The Lord is Risen." "He is risen indeed."

2. Learn by heart the third Easter Day Anthem *or* Rev. i. 18 *or* the Proper Preface in the Communion Service.

3. Look up Psalm cxviii. and find any verses that make it suitable for singing on Easter Day.

4. Describe any *one* incident of the first Easter Day.

Suggestions for Teacher's Study.—Tolstoi's Tale of "Two Old Men" (Jarrold & Sons, 1s.) or Longfellow's "King Robert of Sicily" ("Tales of a Wayside Inn") might be adapted as a story for younger scholars or given to elder ones to read.

SPECIAL LESSON FOR WHITSUNDAY

Introduction.—This year we are studying together the great facts of our religion—what it gives us and what it expects of us; or, in other words, what is meant by our being members of the Church. Now to-day, Whitsunday, is the special festival in the year when our thoughts are turned towards the Great Society itself to which we belong. It is also the special festival on which our thoughts are directed to the work of the Holy Spirit. (Make sure by a few brief questions that the class know the events of the Day of Pentecost as recorded in Acts ii.) The whole history of the Church, from that day to this, is a record of the Holy Spirit's guidance of Christ's Society "in the right way," as the Litany words it. A little later on in the Litany we pray for grace to bring forth the "fruits of the Spirit." Let us think this Whitsunday of some of the fruits of the Spirit that the Church, *as a body*, has brought forth.

I. Reason for Christ's Departure.—There are some words of Our Lord that may perhaps have puzzled you. In speaking of the coming of the Holy Ghost, He says: "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you" (St. John xvi. 7). It is difficult at first to imagine how Christ's going away could possibly be good or expedient for anybody. Let the class have time to think over this and offer any explanation. Lead them to see that Christ's physical presence could not be so close, intimate, and immediate as His spiritual presence. His external *example* was to become an internal *force*. The closing words of St. Matthew's Gospel, "I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," refer to this presence of the Holy Spirit, guiding us into all truth.

II. How the Early Church was Guided.—In the Acts of the Apostles we have a very vivid picture of the Early Church. We feel as we read it how the Church was guided in all the difficulties that arose. The "Acts" has been called the "Gospel of the Holy Spirit" for this reason. To take one instance, let us look at the first great meeting or Council of the Church, described in chapter xv. Although the Christians had become a large body by this time, they were men of the Jewish faith, and felt that there was a great gulf between themselves and the Gentile world; but some of these Gentiles were wanting to join the Church of Christ, and the question arose: "Shall we admit them?" Of course, we know quite well what the answer was, or you and I should not be Christians to-day; but we must remember that it was a burning and anxious question for the Early Church. (The teacher might read St. Peter's speech to the class, vv. 7-11, and tell in his own words the message sent to the Gentiles, calling special attention to v. 28.) As another instance of the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the teacher should refer to the Council of Nicæa, obtaining from the class the occasion, the date, the place, the burning question *then*, and the answer. (See Lesson xiv.)

III. Guidance by the Spirit in Later Times.—It is quite clear from Christ's words in St. John xvi. 12 that the Spirit was to guide the Church *gradually* as it was able to bear it, and as the need and the new circumstances arose. At first, the poor were fed (Acts iv. 34) and clothed (ix. 39); the sick were healed (v. 15); the widows cared for (vi. 1). But as time went on these simple ministrations expanded to meet growing needs. If the Holy Spirit inspired these, surely He inspired Howard to improve the condition of prisons. Read aloud St. John xiv. 26. Did He not bring to Howard's remembrance the words "I was in prison and ye visited me"? Our Lord said "Heal the sick." Are not our hospitals, convalescent homes, and precautions to *prevent* disease instances of the Spirit bringing Christ's words to our remembrance? His command "Feed my Lambs" has produced all the work done for children,

from the early days when the children abandoned by the heathen were adopted by the Church (see Lesson VII.) to our modern work of education. The abolition of slavery may also be instanced as a case for which the world was certainly not ripe in the early days of the Church.

IV. Wide Influence of the Church.—A thoughtful pupil may ask whether all these forms and noble institutions have been the work of the *Church*. In a very real sense they are, although in many cases indirectly so. The Church has been spreading her influence through the world for nearly two thousand years, so that her ideals of conduct have become common property, even among people who do not profess to belong to her. Many men who do not even call themselves Christians lead unselfish lives for the good of their fellows.

Let the class turn to St. Matt. xxv. 35-40, and notice that the words "Ye have done it unto Me" are addressed to men who did not suppose that in helping their neighbour they were serving Christ; they were astonished at being told so: "When saw we *Thee*?" We must remember that all modern schemes of charity and social improvement are the result of the influence of the Christian spirit in Christ's Church. Remind the class of the parable of the grain of mustard seed (St. Matt. xiii. 31, 32), and how the birds of the air come to lodge in the branches.

V. The Holy Spirit in the Church.—We have seen how the Holy Spirit has inspired Christ's Society to great moral and social progress. But these striking changes could never happen without the continual and universal work of the Holy Spirit—that is, every day to every member. Whenever we look at our parish church, let it remind us that the great Society which it stands for is our spiritual *home*. Let the class turn to the Nicene Creed and notice the word "apostolic." Get from the class that the word "apostle" means "sent." What did Christ send His Apostles to do? They were to be the human means by which the Holy Spirit was to come to the Church. Remind the class that we receive the Holy Spirit in our *Baptism*; in our *Confirmation* (let

them name, or look up, the gifts of the Spirit enumerated in the Service); in the *Holy Communion*. Show the class how the *Ordination* of priests provides for the perpetual continuance of these benefits to all; let one pupil read aloud the words of the "Ordering of Priests" beginning "Receive the Holy Ghost"; call attention to the duties named: absolution, preaching God's word, administering Baptism and Holy Communion.

VI. The Church Prays for Guidance.—Let the class turn to the Order for Morning Prayer and find "A Prayer for the Clergy and People." Let one pupil read or quote it. Next let them seek for a similar prayer in the Litany: "That it may please Thee to rule and govern Thy Holy Church. . . ." Finally, let the teacher read impressively, as a close to the lesson, the words of the prayer for all conditions of men: "More especially we pray . . . righteousness of life."

ADDITIONAL HOME OR CLASS WORK

1. Learn Hymn 534, A. and M.
2. Read Acts ii.
3. Look through Hymn 603; write a short note of explanation of every line in the sixth verse.
4. Illuminate Psalm xlviii. 13, or any other verse from the special Psalms for Whitsunday.

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